



Life's simple pleasures

It is very easy to 'guy' the kind of country wisdom which is expressed in quaint sayings and quainter rhymes. The parody, however, will miss the heart of the matter; there will be no grain of truth at the centre. The whole point about such jingles as 'Red sky at night, Shepherd's delight' is that they work; they are distillations of direct observation, carried out over generations. That is why we, for our part, listen to the countryman with pleasure and treat his views with respect. This respect (we say it with all modesty) would seem to be reciprocated. The Midland Bank has always had a close connection with agriculture and this recently has become even more firmly established. The reason, quite certainly, was the announcement by the Midland of a specific policy of assistance to farmers which included loans for up to twenty years for the purchase or improvement of farms. As a result of all this, many schemes have become practical politics instead of pleasant dreams – and we, perhaps, can contradict what we said at the beginning. There is a very large grain of truth indeed in the saying (which we have just invented) . . .

*'Ere barns be broke and pastures rank,
'Tis time to see the Midland Bank.*



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PUNCH

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The London Charivari

APING Paul Slickey I 'phoned a City friend last week to ask how his boycott of South African goods was getting on.

"Fine," he said, "but look here, old chap, I'm desperately busy. Unless you've got something..."

"Must be costing you a packet," I said, "not buying gold."

"That's exactly what I *am* doing, and every moment's precious, so you'll have



to excuse me. Ring me later, there's a good fellow."

"But why aren't you boycotting South African gold?" I said.

"Don't be ridiculous, man," he snapped, "gold's different."

And so, I suppose it is. In America the Republicans know that devaluation of the dollar now would cost Nixon the Presidency; the Democrats know that devaluation after a Kennedy victory on November 8 would confirm everything that's been said about the profligacy of the Democratic programme. And (who knows?) in South Africa the vote for Verwoerd's new republic might easily have gone the other way if the new gold rush had started a few weeks earlier.

Yes, gold *is* different.

Umpire

THE Labour Party could have avoided most of its present agony

and dissension by taking the trouble to re-read the Ministers of the Crown Act (1937). This provides, among other things, for the Leader of the Opposition to receive £2,000 a year, and adds that if any doubt arises as to who actually is the Leader of the Opposition, the decision of the Speaker of the House of Commons shall be final.

Close Focus

IN the news last week: "One of the world's leading experts on eels": a surprise for anyone who didn't even know of the existence of experts on eels, let alone a number of leading ones. However, it is the age of the expert. A friend of mine, speaking of a fellow guest at an ornithologists' convention, said "Actually, he wasn't qualified to



be there; he simply specializes in the breeding habits of a particular kind of flea that lives in the tail-feathers of a rare tropical finch."

Quadrilateral Jubilee

LAST Wednesday the *Punch* Table held an extraordinary meeting to honour four of its members, E. V. Knox, E. H. Shepard, Sir Alan Herbert and P. G. Wodehouse. They have each contributed to the paper for more than fifty years, and not unnaturally *Punch* is very proud of them. It was estimated that



"I can never remember—is it Nixon or Kennedy for nuclear disarmament?"

their combined contributions total more than 10,000, but readers are warned that only a very limited quantity of back numbers is available.

Scrap the Lot?

I HAVE received from the Railway Conversion League a document, *The Future of British Railways*, which puts up an alarmingly cogent case for turning all railways into highways, thus making Britain more prosperous and better-tempered. If the Americans could make a profitable fast highway—the Pennsylvania Turnpike—out of an abandoned railway (runs the argument) why can't we do the same, everywhere? Estimate: £960,000,000 and cheap at the price. The League thinks the conversion would even make for fewer accidents; and, in arguing this, mentions that the railways attract 147 suicides annually, "since suicide facility is an evil characteristic of railways." I wish I could be sure it was not also a characteristic of M1.

State Enterprise

THE announcement of the Egg Marketing Board that it will supply porcelain eggs for shop windows lends a welcome fillip to the artificial egg industry. Of recent years, the vogue for those rather crude pot eggs for

deluding hens has fallen off, thanks to psychological and technological advances, and they are now chiefly used, I imagine, for school egg-and-spoon races. Perhaps the Tomato and Cucumber Board will now put out some artificial vegetables. They would look very well in the shop window refrigerators, along with those *papier-mâché* chickens and plastic chops which are a valuable light industry in themselves.

The Pink Room

BUILDING and decorating consulting and technical services are now offered by Liberal Party H.Q.: "We are run by Liberals for Liberals. Let us quote for your building, decorating and repair work; special terms." If only the offer were open to Socialists too there would be obvious scope for the current fashion of papering one or two of the four walls in different patterns from the main design, and if Tories were eligible there could be a safe reactionary line in Gothic and Jacobean. True Liberal décor ought to be Lloydgeorgian with plenty of proportional representational art.

Getting out of the Groove

LIKE the cotton towns of Lancashire that found they had to have new industries to survive, Reno has decided



"There you go again. You call it 'Ultimate Deterrent' and then add 'Mark I.'"

that it cannot live by divorce alone and must attract additional enterprises. It would be nice, for the sake of tradition, to find plays that echoed the good old days; magazine publication, for instance, with *Other Woman's Realm* and *The Homebreaker's Companion*, or cuckold clock manufacturing, or a college of extramural studies for gamekeepers with *Lady C.* as required reading.

I Wilt

TOO often stung by welshers in the past, a Rutland vicar is now demanding his wedding fees half-way through the ceremony. I hope he realizes that this may supply the last ounce of impetus for the groom to turn and run.

Thatched Egghead

A CENTURY ago come Sunday Paderewski was born, and provided comic artists with an image of wild hair and fingers flashing about the keyboard. When he demonstrated his Polish patriotism by not merely playing Chopin but becoming Prime Minister of Poland, many solid British citizens were baffled: it was like a dog dancing or a woman preaching. What had the arts in common with the serious business of life? Nowadays, thank heaven, the philistines have been routed. After all, in the last war it was the nation that was led by the better painter that won.

Ushers, Go Hey!

THE Old Bailey preserves many charming customs from the world of the Cries of London, like the carrying of sweet-smelling herbs by the judges as they enter. One reporter mentioned a pretty aspect of the *Lady Chatterley* case: the bundle of volumes was handed to the jury "tied up in pink ribbon." How I wish I did not know that what looks like pink ribbon is really red tape.

Anti-Culturist

NEWSPAPER diarists, I would ordinarily say, only get what they deserve, but I felt a twinge of compassion for the one who decided to take a count of deaths on TV last week, and finished up with a disappointingly modest total—which even then had had to be boosted up by including the rich crop of killings in *King Henry the Sixth, Part III.*

—MR. PUNCH



Norman MacStrider

"Come on United!"

Colonel, M.C., F.R.S.L., late Royal Dragoons. Born in Russia, educated France, Germany, England. Regular Army for 32 years, regular writer all his life. Fought twelve-year battle over a will by which he believed his sister had been defrauded. Conducted case himself in House of Lords and won. 63.

A. D. WINTLE

4

Minister of Defence



MY first action on being appointed Minister of Defence would be to order a haircut all round. This would give me time to take stock of my position and by means of the thinning-out of the undergrowth would enable me to appraise at its true density the wood which thitherto had been obscured by the trees. While this tidying-up process was being consummated I should send for some reputable dictionary in order to discover the meaning of the word "Defence."

It may at first sight seem to be an unprecedented action for a Minister to try to understand the meaning of the work entrusted to him or to endeavour to define the scope of his responsibilities, but I would attempt to console myself with the thought that for me so to be appointed must indicate that the usual humdrum methods of the past would no longer be required.



Now, according to the dictionary definition, Defence is the art of baffling the enemy's attempts. From this it is clear that it behoves me to discover who is the Enemy, where and when his attempts will be perpetrated and how best I can frustrate his knavish tricks.

If we consider the history of the world during the last half century we find that the British Empire has been plunged into two first-class World Wars, as well as becoming involved in innumerable minor upheavals. The closer we examine the two World Wars the more does it become evident that the enemy of the human race is not the Kaiser, nor Hitler, nor even Cetewayo, but actually the British Foreign Office, who by means of a system known as diplomacy or tact ensured that nothing should be done to upset any prospective enemy who might thus prepare his attack in peace and at leisure, while ensuring that any possible ally should be antagonized beyond endurance and left till the last moment with the gravest doubts as to which side we would fight on.

I should therefore take the whole of the Foreign Office to the Zoo and incarcerate them in the building where all the larger members of the cat tribe are kept until such time as each official should have discovered by personal observation that the leopard cannot change his spots. I should then allow them to return to their offices.

I should then assemble all my officials without distinction of creed or colour and would address them as follows:

"This is the Ministry of Defence. You are all here to do what you can to prepare to defend Britain. If any of you should take any initiative and the result turn out to be a mistake I forgive you here and now. But if any mistake should occur because anybody dared not take action, that is the eighth deadly sin. Heaven may forgive you, but I won't."

I should then disband the Fifth Column. In the old days, when King Arthur or Sir Lancelot or Ahasueras or any of those people arrived to do battle without rations or with their bowstrings soaked in water or with their boots on the wrong feet, it was understood that Merlin or Fata Morgana or the Witch of Endor had cast a spell or thrown a fluence on the proceedings as a result of which everything went wrong. The real reason, of course, was sheer stupidity.

Nowadays, official circles no longer believe in Merlin nor in Father Christmas, which seems odd when we consider some of the things they do believe. So they invented the Fifth Column to explain away the same shortcomings as caused trouble in the past.

In order to fill the gap caused by the disappearance of this famous old corps I should recruit a composite regiment of psychiatrists and crooners. I like to think of these worthies, drilled until their feet were red-hot and their shirts wet through, eagerly seizing the opportunities afforded them by the regulation halts on the line of march to get some extra polish on their equipment.

Having thus disposed of the broad principles of policy, I should then set about reorganizing office routine.

All forms would have to be paid for out of the salary of the official emitting them. In addition any individual who should invent any new form must pay for the printing and distribution.

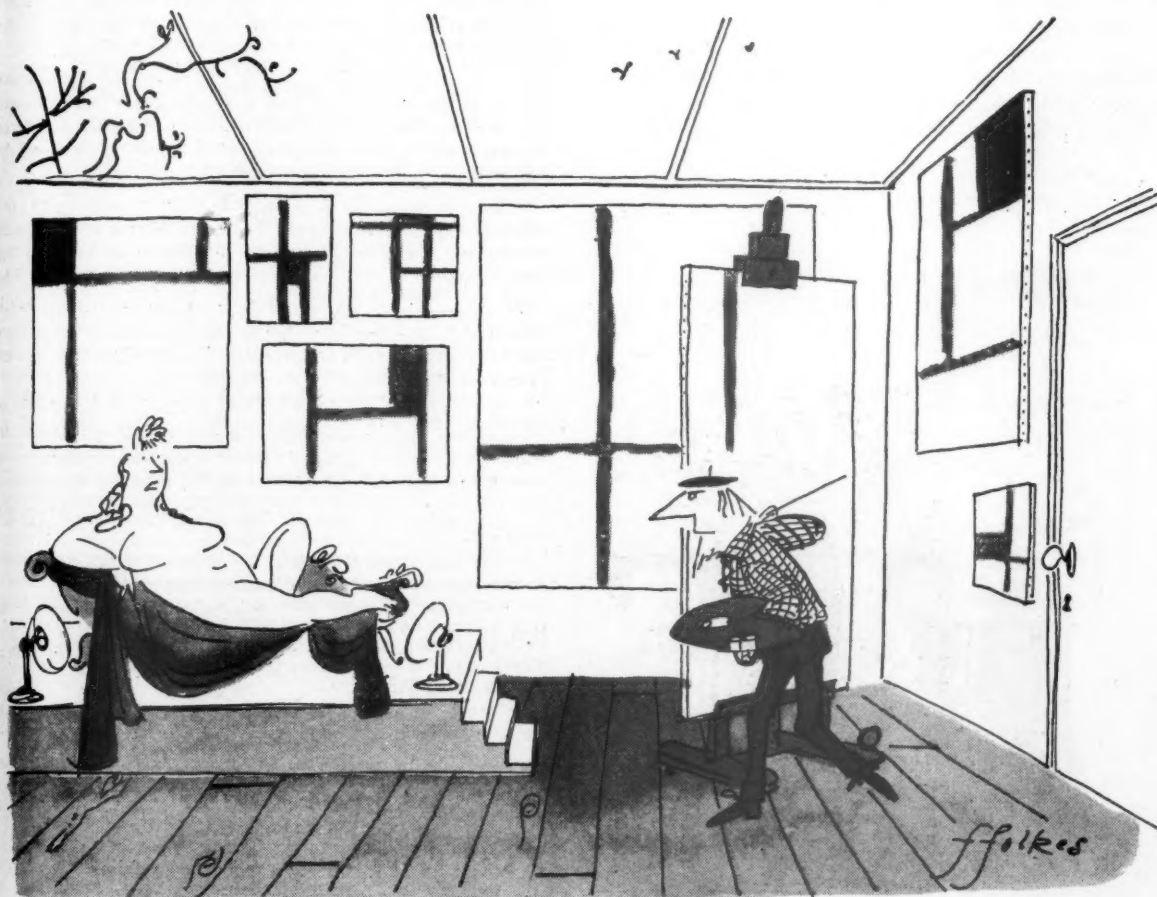
Any person using the word "Secret" must deposit a shilling for each use of the word, including carbon copies. Only elevenpence would be refundable in the event of it

being proved that the use of "Secret" was justified and then only as a post-war credit. The word "Urgent" would come under even more drastic treatment. The deposit in this case would be a guinea with only one pound refundable and the practitioner would forfeit six months' leave to ensure that never again should he get behind-hand with his work.

I should then make a determined attempt to reintroduce the use of the English language into my Ministry in the hope that simple ideas should no longer be complicated by alembicated paraphrases, that complete lack of ideas should not be expressed at all, but that all documents should reveal at first sight that the writer does not know what he means but is doing the best he can to conceal the fact.

No longer should we be confronted with summaries such as the following:

"According to generally unconfirmed reports, from sources which hitherto have not shown themselves invariably to be entirely unreliable, it would appear that the Enemy, if indeed he is either in or in the vicinity of the location as reported in Intelligence Summary No. 999 as amended by Summary No. 1212, seems to be in the process of what might be described as a series of concentric movements which



"I don't really know why you need me, Mr. Firbank."

might give verisimilitude to the supposition that some form of concentration may be intended, although it may well be that this activity, if indeed it is taking place at all, may well resolve itself into a concatenation of eccentric manoeuvres, in which case his dispositions may conceivably develop into some form of partial dispersal. Whichever of these surmises should eventually prove to be correct, it may confidently be assumed that the intentions of the Enemy are, generally speaking, somewhat at variance with the policy of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the intentions of the Cabinet (as already stated in Summary No. 998).

"Although this report should be accepted with a certain degree of reserve, there are indications that the unrelenting watch which is being maintained on the Enemy is beginning to give good results."

What all this really means is: "We haven't the foggiest idea where the Enemy is, what he's doing or what he's going to do; but he's up to no good. And it's about time we brightened up our ideas and found out."

The next major problem would be the answering of Parliamentary Questions.

Briefly stated, these fall into two main groups: those asked by Members who are more concerned with airing their views than with any desire to increase the scope of their knowledge; those asked by Members who know nothing and have little fear of compromising their innocence.

I have imagined a series of Questions and Answers which will give some indication of a possible method of dealing with such matters, although I like to think that the existing system which has operated satisfactorily for so long, of producing either an answer which shall be incomprehensible

or else of setting up a Royal Commission to study the problem, needs no improvement.

The following will indicate the sort of thing one may expect:

COLONEL FIREBRACE (Rotten Row, Conf.) asked the Minister of Defence what further changes were contemplated in Rocket Development.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—I am not quite clear what particular changes my gallant and honourable friend has in mind.

COLONEL FIREBRACE.—Is the Minister aware of the disquieting reports that there may be some intention of endeavouring to refurbish rockets declared obsolete at the time of the Crimea by means of atomic charges purchased from former enemy countries but marked "Made in Birmingham" and that this is causing grave concern to my constituents who specialize in this important product?

MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—I would prefer not to comment on newspaper reports which I gather are not accurate.

MR. BONEHEAD (Frigidayr Burghs, Inc.) asked if the Minister would now declare the policy of H.M. Government on the subject of Bases in the Middle East and what steps were contemplated with regard to their establishment.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—H.M. Government are fully determined that the matter of Bases in the Middle East shall receive every consideration compatible with our commitments elsewhere and having due regard to the circumstances as and when they arise. While no such circumstances have yet arisen, I have instructed the Chiefs of Staff of the three Services to prepare a report on the particular considerations which apply to accommodating units of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force, which will vary considerably in each case and with some reference to the Middle East having regard to the geographic location and the climatic conditions in so far as our treaty obligations will admit. It is hoped to publish this report shortly as a White Paper.

MR. MAC SPORRAN (Sassenach U.D.C. Lbw.) asked the Minister if he had considered the desirability of making use of the services of feeble-minded but harmless persons to collect fruit in order to relieve the man-power problem in times of National Emergency.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—This is hardly a matter for Ministerial intervention. Should the Honourable Member for Sassenach consider it necessary, it is surely a matter for private arrangement between himself and his constituents should he wish to absent himself from Parliament in order to pick apples.

VISCOUNT GOOSEBERRY (Slough and Despond, Intemp.) asked if the Minister was fully aware that a certain amount of dissatisfaction had arisen, not only in international circles, from which one could not exclude former enemies nor even potential allies, but also in influential home circles with particular reference to the Potteries, in regard to the attitude of H.M. Government towards the situation which appeared to threaten to develop in those mandated territories and condominiums administered by those members of the International Organization which had undertaken to foster those principles of Freedom, Justice, Self-determination and Traffic Control which have been the fundamental basis of our Constitution?

MINISTER OF DEFENCE.—No, sir.

THE SPEAKER.—We cannot debate this any further.

Finally, I should appoint a very important official, whose duties would empower him to enter any Government Office anywhere, and especially those marked: "No Admittance, by Order," in order that he might find out what is really being done.

Resplendent in some raiment which would make it uneasy to determine whether he is a high officer of the Law, a senior dignitary of the Church, an important member of any or all



"Haven't you got anything a bit more suitable for the country?"

of the fighting Services, or even a Take-over-Bidder in full flight, his bearing and personality should be such as to leave no doubt in everybody's mind as to the power of his authority, or the irrevocability of his decisions. One likes to think of this individual of stately and masterly mien entering the Ministerial portals and selecting at random some door which would immediately be flung wide open by his respectful retinue.

He would enter this room and, fixing the inmate with a compelling eye, he would say:

"What have you done to-day?"

The occupant of the room would bustle forward zealously, feverishly shuffling his papers.

"I have here, sir, a most interesting case," he would begin. "We have discovered that units have been drawing more rum-ration than their entitlement. It has taken us a good deal of trouble to fix the exact responsibility, but at last we have got to the bottom of it and have discovered that the entire blame rests on an Orderly Corporal who exceeded his duties. The Corporal has been reduced to the ranks and we are now issuing a new regulation which shall make it impossible for this ever to occur again."

The All-Powerful Official would frown.

"That is not something done," he would say. "All you have done is to prevent some abuse, real or supposed."

He would then signal to two uniformed attendants in the passage, specially selected for their physical development and athletic training.

"Take him and all his papers," he would command, "and throw him out into the street and see to it that he never returns here again."

But in another room he would meet one who in answer to his question, would begin to explain: "Well, Sir, I have delivered two dozen Hot-Cross buns to the troops at..."

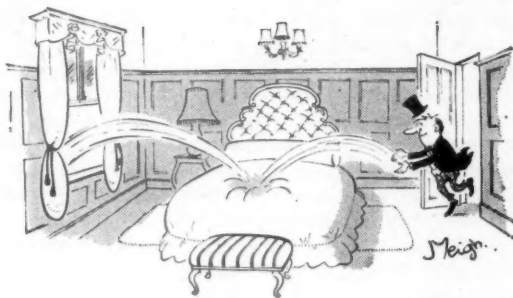
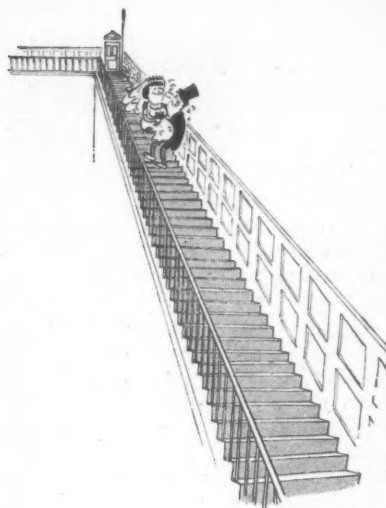
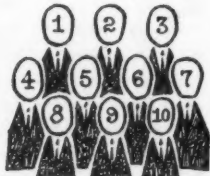
But the All-Powerful would interrupt him.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant," he would say. "Continue with the good work."

There is always the risk that somebody should be beforehand with me and appoint just such an All-Powerful Official whose duties would be to maintain the existing system, so much so that it would be myself who would be flung out into the street. Still, I suppose that one must accept this as just another of the occupational hazards and that my ideas of being Minister of Defence are altogether too offensive.

Other portfolios will be offered to:

- (5) **GWYN THOMAS**
Chancellor of the Exchequer
- (6) **A. P. H.**
Home Secretary
- (7) **NIGEL KNEALE**
Minister of Power
- (8) **STIRLING MOSS**
Minister of Transport
- (9) **FRANK RICHARDS**
Minister of Education
- (10) **ARNOLD WESKER**
Minister of Housing



An Alpine Search

HE murmured "Edelweiss" and gazed above
Where lay, he hoped, the object of his search.
Testing the lowest foothold, then began
To climb towards his goal, this daring man.
One foot was safe, the other followed soon
His hands secured a hold above his head.
Another step, another and half-way
Pausing and panting—"Edelweiss," he said.
Leaning precariously to his right
He lost his glasses and with them his sight;
But skilful fingers grasped and firmly held
His eagerly pursued and precious prize,
And, satisfied, he made his slow descent
Till at the bottom, specs replaced on eyes,
He saw with anger that the thing he held
Was—Volume 5 containing EGG—ELD.

—MARY DAWSON

Delenda Est Middlesex

By H. F. ELLIS

ELIZABETH THE SECOND (so begins the Royal Warrant), by the Grace of God, etc., etc., to Our Trusty and Well-beloved

[Here follow the names, styles and titles of six trusty and well-beloved citizens]

GREETING!

Whereas we have deemed it expedient that a Commission should forthwith issue [here follow the Terms of Reference of the Commission . . .]

NOW KNOW YE that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability have authorized and appointed, and do by these presents authorize and appoint you [here follow the names of the said six trusty and well-beloved citizens] to be our Commissioners, etc., etc.

It is not to be supposed that after such an exordium the six Commissioners failed to apply themselves with exemplary diligence and tenacity to their task of examining, reporting upon, and making recommendations about desirable changes, if any, in the existing system of local government in Greater London, an area "comprising," as the Royal Warrant (with a temporary and inevitable lapse from sublimity) lays down "the Metropolitan Police District

together with the City of London, the boroughs of Dartford, Romford and Watford, the urban districts of Caterham and Warlingham, Chorleywood, Hornchurch, Rickmansworth, and Walton and Weybridge, and the Parish of Watford Rural in the Watford rural district." On the contrary, they spared no pains to apprise themselves of every aspect of local government in the said area, calling upon every conceivable council, body, society and private person to give them the benefit of their views, visiting and revisiting boroughs, county boroughs and urban districts (including even the Parish of Watford Rural in the Watford rural district), and asking in all the respectable total of fifteen thousand, nine hundred and forty-nine questions.

Still less is it likely that, after reading the Commissioners' extremely able, clear, cogently argued and fully documented Report, which rises at times, on the wings of its noble theme, to passion and poetry,* a simple citizen,

* The Report quotes Blake at some length—probably a record for a Royal Commission—though not, for some reason, from his poem on "London," which begins "I wander thro' each charter'd street, Near where the charter'd Thames does flow, And mark in every face I meet Marks of weakness, marks of woe."

as uninformed as the present writer about the problems of local government, would wish to challenge any of its boldly logical recommendations. Criticism, in any case, will not be lacking from other quarters. The L.C.C. cannot be expected to concur readily in its own demise. Hampstead will view its proposed amalgamation with St. Pancras with no more enthusiasm than Battersea will feel at the prospect of becoming a part of a part of Wandsworth. Proud Kingston-upon-Thames, seat of Kings, and Queen of Surrey, is not the place to lie down unprotesting with the boroughs of Surbiton and Malden-and-Coombe. Already mutterings have been heard from Surrey and Essex, threatened with the loss of 62·6 and 5·45 per cent of their populations respectively; and it is safe to predict that such a buzzing of mayors and aldermen will shortly arise, so loud an outcry among councillors and sheriffs about the public good and bureaucratic steamrolling and the irreparable blow to local pride and patriotism in Poplar and Carshalton, as never was heard in the whole history of local government. As for Middlesex—but Middlesex is the fifteen thousand, nine hundred and fiftieth question. In its death throes the county deserves at least a new paragraph.

"In Chapter I," observe the Commissioners, themselves starting a new paragraph (No. 940, on page 237), "we mentioned that a sense of history and tradition is needed to support the sense of community necessary to successful local government. We can think of nothing so stimulating to this sense as the spectacle of the City, with its Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, and the attendant ceremonial with the patina of centuries upon it. These are advantages we should not give up and whose absence would leave an unfillable gap in our national life." Very well. The City is spared, with all its anomalies, instead of being thrown in with the new Greater London borough of Holborn-Finsbury-and-Shoreditch—and few, one dare guess, will quarrel with that. But Middlesex is to go, swallowed up, lost without trace in the mighty territories of the Council for Greater London.

THEN AS NOW

FIREWORKS FOR THE FIFTH



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5s. BOX.

GUINEA BOX.

FIVE-GUINEA BOX.

Now Middlesex, which dates only from Saxon times, cannot vie in the matter of patinas with the City of London, which was a "busy emporium" in Boadicea's day. Nor has it had much luck in the matter of independence, for when we first hear of it it was a sub-kingdom dependent on Essex, of all places, and in 1101 Henry I "granted it in farm to the citizens of London" (whatever that may mean), while down to as recently as 1888 it had to suffer the indignity of a shared sheriff, each of the two elected City sheriffs being also Sheriff of Middlesex on alternate days. Still, though something of a hanger-on, who shall say that Middlesex is entirely without that "sense of history and tradition" whose absence would leave a gap in our national life? Dare we forget that Warwick the King-maker was slain at the Battle of Barnet in 1471? Was it not Middlesex that three times sent Wilkes to the House of Commons, defying the whole strength of a Parliament bent on unconstitutional courses—and for that matter sent Hendren and Denis Compton to Lord's? This is not a name and county to discard lightly or without a tear.

That Middlesex as an administrative county is doomed to go one can hardly doubt. What is so distressing is that the Commissioners do not seem to regret it. By no means careless, as we have seen, of the importance of tradition, they many times lay stress on their desire to preserve wherever possible whatever is hallowed by time and usage. To other counties, into whose territories their recommendations come cranking in, they are at pains to say a cheering word. Para. 968:

"We have therefore come to the conclusion that our proposals will not reduce the Counties of Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent or Surrey to a level where in absolute terms or by comparison with other counties in the country they will not be financially viable."

And again, at para. 861:

"We do not see any reason why our proposals should affect many of the other kinds of organization based on geographical counties. We are trying to find a suitable administrative structure, we are not trying to blot out the loyalties to the traditional counties. We see no reason, for example, why the resident of Beckenham should not, if he wishes to, still call himself a Kentish man . . ."



"Beat it—Trafalgar Square's already booked for Civil Disobedience to-night."

No indeed, since there will still be a Kent to be a Kentish man of. But what about the resident of Potters Bar when Middlesex has altogether gone with the wind? Is not the omission of some kindly word for him a little strange, a little marked? Is it not odd that the most notable extinction in all the Recommendations should be passed over in so chilly a silence?

One may, of course, in some three hours' traffic with the Report in the cosy reading room of the Westminster Public Library, have overlooked the remorseful, the redeeming phrase. The fact remains that the references to Middlesex actually noted were of a different kind. "When one comes to Middlesex," observes para. 678 in the course of some remarks about relations between County Councils and local authorities, "one finds the temperature of feeling very high indeed . . ." And again, at para. 680: "It seems to us most unfortunate that things have reached such a pass in Middlesex that the Chairman of the Middlesex County Council thought it worth his while to devote a large part of his opening statement in oral evidence to polemics against the larger boroughs in Middlesex." Dare one trace a connection between what is said about Middlesex and what is not? Is it

possible that the trusty and well-beloved Commissioners took such a scunner against Middlesex that, by the time they came to write their Report, they found they could recommend it out of existence without even a pretended flicker of regret?

Well, well. "Time hath his revolutions," as has been finely said; "there must be a period and an end to all temporal things—*finis rerum*—an end of names and dignities, and whatever is terrene, and why not of De Vere? For where is Bohun? Where is Mowbray? Where is Mortimer? Nay, which is more and most of all, where is Plantagenet? They are entombed in the urns and sepulchres of mortality." The Commissioners I dare say would have said the same thing if they had thought of it, substituting Middlesex for De Vere. But they would have had to cut the final sentence of Chief Justice Crewe's judgment, which runs: "And yet let the name and dignity of De Vere stand so long as it pleaseth God!"

☆

"Cook, good character, requires good cook post, private house with clean, truthful people, where house-parlourmaid kept; near town preferred."—*Yorkshire Post*

Last lot dirty liars?

Keep It Snappy But Safe

By E. S. TURNER



THE good citizen who, while opening his mail, is exhorted by postmark to give his blood, stagger his holidays, pray for peace, visit the Croydon Pageant and remember William Wilberforce, must often wonder how the Postmaster-General finds time to remember all these things.

Suppose that he, the good citizen, were to think of a public-spirited slogan—a timely distich like “Too Much Viewing Is Our Undoing”—would the Postmaster-General use it? Or does he have his own little clique of contributors? Was it a staff poet who penned the recent popular lyric “Correct Addressing—What a Blessing, Saves Us Guessing,” or was it submitted by an outsider?

It is time some of these questions were answered, and the last may as well be answered first: it was a staff poet. The outsider who offers a slogan to the Postmaster-General will be told that it costs money to tool up the machines and that he should try to find some society or organization willing to provide the funds. About how much would

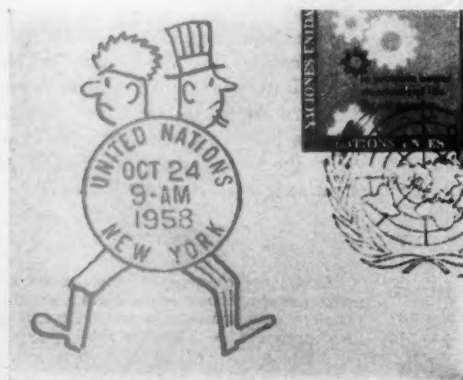
it cost? persists the inquirer. Well, says the Postmaster-General, if all the three hundred and fifty postmasters so far in the game were instructed to print the slogan it would cost between £2,000 and £2,500. But if it was a slogan for a limited area only, something about the Peckham Dairy Show, the fee would be very much less; perhaps £50 or so. At this stage the inquirer may change his mind and try his hand at getting a joke on a matchbox.

A postmark slogan must be one “of national importance, non-controversial and inoffensive to public opinion at home and abroad.” That means, for example, there must be no incitement to planned parenthood or fair rents. As it is there are plenty of people who think it in poor taste to postmark an income-tax demand with an appeal for blood and they have been writing to the papers for years to say so. In the Antipodes, three years ago, there was trouble because telephone accounts were postmarked “A Still Tongue Makes A Good Citizen.” It was a war-time slogan which had been put

back into circulation, perhaps accidentally, perhaps by a testy official who was tired of listening to people yapping. Anyway the authorities had to apologize. It shows the sort of trouble that can happen.

The most recent bother about postmarks in Britain occurred over the open hand symbol designed by Dame Laura Knight for World Refugee Year. In the course of cancellation the thumb of the hand sometimes came up alongside the nose of the Queen on the stamp. Much shocked, the *Daily Sketch* showed its readers a picture of the Queen cocking a snook. The symbol was redesigned. Less open to misunderstanding was the cabalistic device used in the World Mental Health postmark, since few people knew what it was supposed to mean.

Not long before that open hand affair there was trouble because letters posted to Hungary with refugee slogans on them were rejected. They had to be readdressed and the stamps were cancelled without slogans. In hot wars as well as cold wars postmark slogans



have stirred up acrimony. British prisoners of war were victimized in 1918 because their letters bore appeals to feed the guns with War Bonds—the first postal slogans used in Britain. Fortunately somebody remembered about this during World War Two.

Even the best-intentioned slogan will be misread by someone. "Britain Says Thankyou For Food Gifts," in 1949, was intended as a courteous acknowledgment of favours received, but was interpreted in some quarters as a solicitation. Members of Parliament said this slogan had appeared on letters sent to Italy and Germany and were very cross indeed.



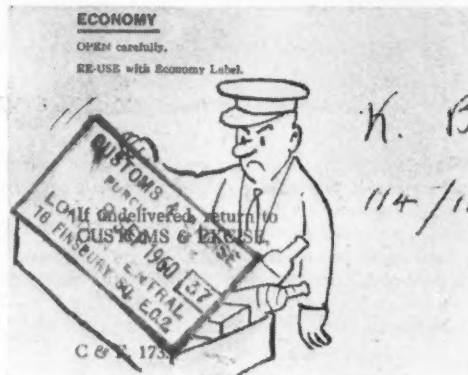
Many of the Postmaster-General's slogans are sponsored by other Government departments. He himself no doubt bore the cost of the joy bells which were used as cancellations for a month after VE-Day and also the joy bells with lovers' knot which, in 1947, commemorated the wedding of the Queen and Prince Philip. A discussion of this postmark in the House of Commons rapidly, and regrettably,

degenerated to a point at which the future Lord Hailsham was moved to ask "Will the Postmaster-General consider the introduction of a design of balls and chains symbolizing the Government's policy?" The House of Commons is a risible body and this time the Tory back-benchers bruised their ribs with laughing.

The desire to praise famous men on suitable anniversaries inspires an occasional commemorative postmark.

William Wilberforce was honoured in this manner at the instance of his admirers in Hull, and so was Samuel Johnson at the request of Lichfield. Probably more famous men would receive this accolade if the facilities were better known. It is time the Postmaster-General put out a brochure stating his terms for poets and

philosophers, thus encouraging local pride and drumming up revenue at the same time. Similarly, for every Wallasey which advertises the jubilee of its charter, there must be a Widnes or a Warrington which lets the event go by default. In America they are very keen on postmarks celebrating municipal sesquicentennials. Local authorities in Britain should find out what sesquicentennials are and make arrangements



to observe them. The French, again, sometimes advertise the products of a region. Is it time, perhaps, to give the Fair Isle weavers and the clotted cream industry a break?

No one will need to be told that slogan postmarks are eagerly sought by collectors. The Postmaster-General very civilly informs the secretaries of the philatelic societies when a new one is due, so that they can obtain first-day covers. The postmarks are then hopefully scanned for blemishes.

In the top left-hand corner of an envelope anyone is at liberty—up to a point—to apply his own slogan by way of a meter-franking machine. These slogans, as was explained in Parliament in 1951, must also avoid controversy since they are liable to be associated with the Postmaster-General. Slogans which had been rejected by the meter-franking firms in the year preceding that statement included "Join the Conservative Party," "Vote Conservative," an appeal by the Taunton Conservatives for "Just One More Heave," and "Under Free Enterprise British Cement Is The Best In The World." The last, of course, was open to objection on the ground that it was not a slogan but a testament. If they had said "You Can't Dent British Cement" it would have got by.



"The Post Office admits that there is often an hour's delay with calls to such Continental centres as Zurich, Frankfurt, and Paris. The reason for this delay is said to be the acute shortage of staff at the Continental Exchange in London; the exchange is 15 to 17 per cent understaffed at the moment. The G.P.O.'s main difficulty in recruiting staff for the exchange is that it needs operators with knowledge of at least one language."—*Times Weekly Review*

Not during the hour's delay.

U.S. Election Result: Final

Condensed from CLAUD COCKBURN'S "Advisory Service for Leader Writers"

What with the time difference and other complications, the problem of commenting on major events in the United States has always and inevitably presented a special problem to appraisers in Britain. Frankly, so far as Britain is concerned, American events tend to occur too late at night.

In the case of the Presidential election results the difficulties are multiplied—for the magnitude of the business itself calls not only for immediate but for lengthy and sapient comment.

As part of Claud Cockburn's Editorial Services the following is made available to those who, through lack of either technical resources or self-confidence, may feel that things will somehow not be all right on the night.

With this top-level appraisal in type, your chief editorial writer can face November 9 with equanimity.

IT is early days to attempt a full assessment of the significance for America and the world of the results of the recent Presidential election. Yet at a moment of such urgency as never before, such an evaluation must be undertaken, if only in the interests of that clear thinking without which the western world simply cannot do.

A word of caution is necessary at the outset.

Grossly to exaggerate this or that factor in what has been termed—and rightly so—the "totality of the picture" without regard for other factors equally important would be in our opinion a mistake and could well lead to mistaken conclusions.

In other words there is but small value in representing the victory of the successful candidate and his Vice-Presidential running mate as implying either much more, or much less, in terms of the over-all world situation than it actually does.

It is naturally a matter for the deepest satisfaction to know that, as the President-elect is about to affirm in his first speech to the nation, American policy will continue to be directed towards the ultimate well-being of the United States and of the peoples of the world.

These are brave and inspiring words. But there is no reason to doubt their sincerity. We cannot assess their effect

upon those—whoever they may actually be—holding the real power in Moscow and Peking, not to speak of Belgrade, Cairo and of course Baghdad.

But there is no doubt that Mr. Macmillan speaks for England in his goodwill telegram to the President-elect, particularly in that passage in which he reaffirms his faith in the friendship of what he aptly terms "the English-speaking peoples" as a factor making for the ultimate well-being of the peoples of the world as a whole.

Mr. Gaitskell's telegram speaks no less for England, though the warm-hearted words are arranged in a different order.

In the course of a campaign notable for what have been called its "campaign qualities" the public on both sides of the Atlantic has had every opportunity to get to know the political attitude, domestic and international, of the man who in a few months' time will enter the White House. What practical relation there may be between his campaign speeches and his actions when actually in office remains of course to be seen. In this sphere speculation, while healthy and inevitable, can be useful only in so far as it is recognized as futile.

Here at least we can give Mr. Khrushchev and his associates an object lesson in democratic processes, particularly so far as the workings of the free press are concerned.

In some quarters too little attention has been paid to the character and personality of the Vice-President elect. Yet it is a harsh but ineluctable fact that this individual, plunged for the moment into the dreary obscurity of his new office, can—as a result of a fatal accident, a mortal disease or a successful assassination affecting his superior—be propelled upwards, rocket-wise, and within minutes find himself



"Does 'retire immediately' mean go to bed?"

"I suppose we've got a lot to be thankful for, really."



seated like a recovered cone in the Presidential chair.

In the present case it is indeed reassuring to reflect that the new Vice-President is a man of sterling qualities who has at all times, and sometimes in circumstances which could have caused the collapse of a lesser statesman, shown himself capable of dealing with situations as they arose.

Nor can there be any doubt at all that he like his chief is opposed to Communism. To probe further than this, to seek to elicit what these two men actually *think* they are going to do about nuclear weapons, general disarmament, NATO and kindred matters, would be at this stage an impertinence which could do nothing but harm to Anglo-American relations.

The election campaign and its outcome have of course given considerable encouragement to that section of American opinion which is in favour of jettisoning their present method and machinery of Government in favour of a system approximating to the British.

This is not normally a highly articulate group, but a spokesman pointed

out that the campaign has once again underlined a principal objection to the present American procedure—namely that it is almost wholly unintelligible to British and Europeans and therefore contributes to America's isolation in the world.

"The first thing an Englishman or European wants to know about our President-elect is 'Is he to the Left or Right of the fellow that got defeated?' Met with a stare and a mumble he resents it. You get anti-American feeling building up. He feels there's jiggery-pokery somewhere and the next thing you know he's stoning the local American Office of Information."

As against this it may cogently be argued that developments in Britain are easing the way to understanding.

The thing English people used most bitterly to complain of was that there was "no difference" between the Republican and Democratic Parties. And it was necessary to explain to them that each of these parties is a loose coalition of mutually incompatible and hostile elements banded together once every four years for the purpose of getting a

firm grip on the White House, after which one would see what best to do.

Until quite recently this seemed to English people an absurd if not downright shady way of going on.

Now, it may be opined, the English are being punished for their overweening pride. For in so far as we have a two-party system it seems nearly impossible to distinguish between the policies of the party leaderships.

And the real political differences existing express themselves only in bitter conflicts—open in some cases, concealed in others—between the members of the two "coalitions of interest" who, as in the United States, ally themselves almost exclusively for the purpose of trying to get their top men into Downing Street at General Election time.

This, with a glance at the bright side and a brief whistle in the dark, may be seen as constituting—like everything else which contributes to mutual comprehension—a boon.

With the same glance and whistle we may affirm that on the whole the "best" man has won.



DIRECT STEERING

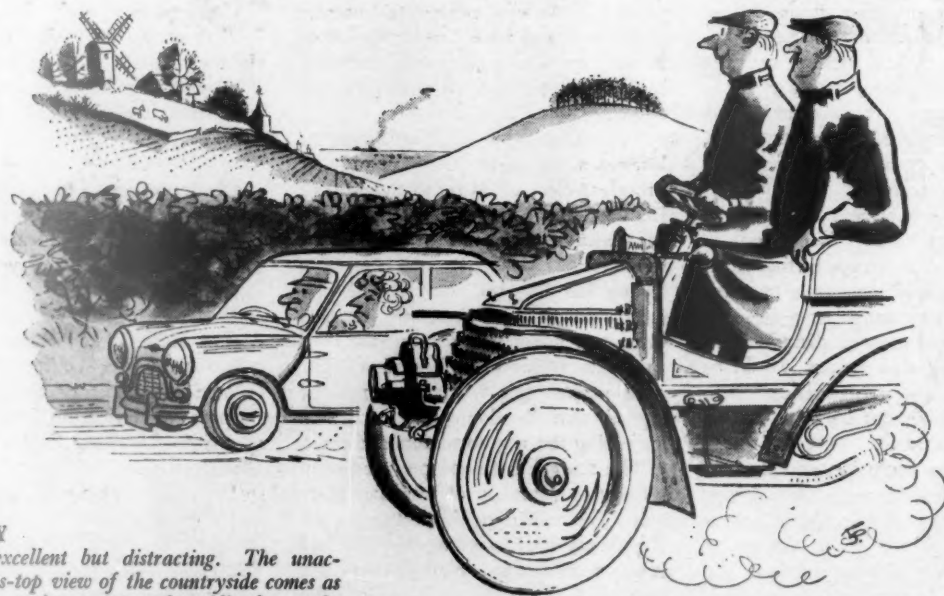
Only a motorist who has recently had traction-engine-type play eliminated from his steering, and trained himself to the strange new accuracy of aim, can feel really at home with a wheel the size of a ring-bolt on which the slightest wrench achieves a change of direction through 40°.

IMPROVED MODEL

BY the time these words see print this year's London-to-Brighton will be over and we shall know whether the 1902 Wolseley made it. At the time of writing we don't, though we have had a short and deafening test run. This suggested that the car, which has no nervous system and has spent more than half a century learning to live with vibration, is on the whole more likely to stay the course than the driver.

The car has the air of a prototype, and it may be a surprise to learn that it was in fact a repeat order for a satisfied customer. Old documents record that the colour scheme specified was "similar to Col. Good's old car." So there were old cars even in 1902. Col. Good was particular and ordered nineteen modifications, among them an odometer, which he offered to supply—having access, perhaps, to some well-stocked scrapyard—a gearcase to cover the chain, and the discontinuance of "cupboards under the back of the tonneau seats." All this is worth noting as an example of what to-day's motorists owe to their predecessors. But for Col. Good our chains might still be exposed to the elements, and our wives nearly off their heads changing the shelf-paper in the cupboards.

Further reference to the B.M.C. archives discloses that this car, or one easily mistaken for it, triumphed at the 1902 French Motor Show, "winning the Gold Medal for Elegance." Elegant she may be, but a man driving fifty miles on the A 23 needs to know more. The following points were noted.

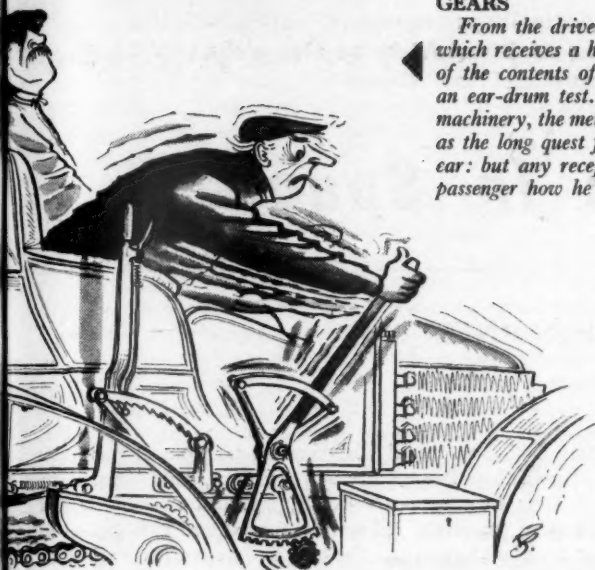


VISIBILITY

This is excellent but distracting. The unaccustomed bus-top view of the countryside comes as a shock to motorists accustomed to riding low on the road surface, and absent-minded admiration of cows, old bomb-craters or neat bits of ploughing is a thing to avoid.

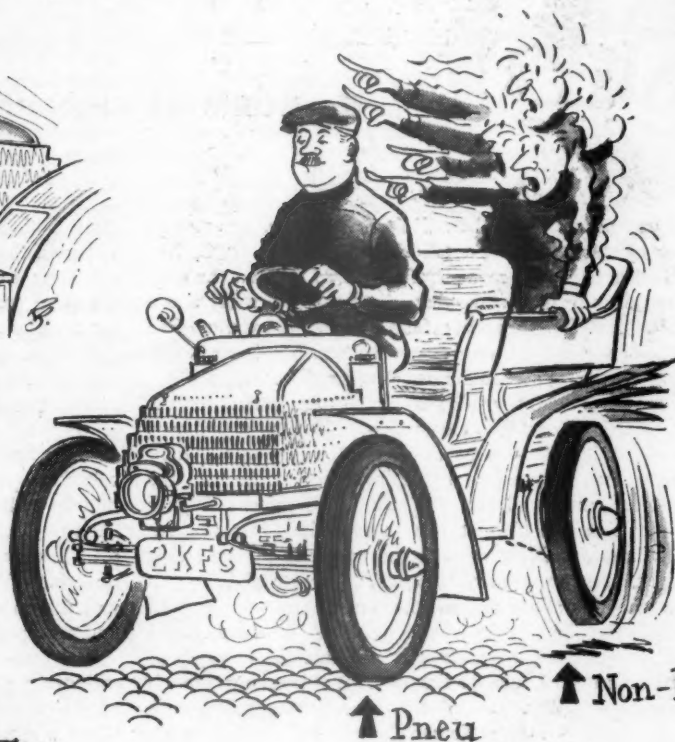
GEARS

From the driver's point of view the gear-box is splendid for the liver, which receives a health-giving pummelling in sympathy with the agitation of the contents of the box. For passengers the gear-changing is mainly an ear-drum test. The driver is too intent to notice the screams of the machinery, the metallic, reluctant juxtapositions of stoutly built components as the long quest for a re-engaged transmission repeats and repeats in his ear: but any reception committee at the Palace Pier wanting to ask the passenger how he's feeling had better shout through cupped hands.



SPEED

At slower speeds parts of the car must be expected to slip out of sight, but the delirium eases as the meter climbs into the twenties—except in the rear where it tends to remain constant.



↑ Pneu

↑ Non-Pneu



to the specification these operate by means of "contracting bands to wheels," and this may well be so. It seems a pity, in this case, that tyres are pneumatic; it is difficult to feel the fullest confidence in everything you've got—not, actually, an awful lot—when your car is at the wrong end. However, this is a minor anxiety. The real trouble. When you pull it on, it's off. There's a sense of unease about this.

With these few points mastered, practically anyone can drive this car, given an iron constitution, a foolhardy streak, and a wide berth by everything else on the road. Prayers against a mechanical failure are also recommended, because the weather-proof costume commonly adopted for the trip makes walking home a little embarrassing.

Science Fiction needs improvement, so PUNCH is presenting a series of SF stories as the great novelists might have written them



Dickens in Space

By NORMAN SHRAPNEL

IT was nearly time. Mr. Tinker was ready, was steady, was eager to go. To tell the unvarnished truth, Mr. Tinker had, in a manner of speaking, jumped the gun. He was already in a somewhat elevated state, a bit above himself. Mr. Tinker, in fact, found himself the victim of an entirely unaccustomed, doubtless reprehensible, but possibly (for just this once) pardonable attack of simple, manly pride.

And who should begrudge it him, as he waited for the royal and cheerily smiling Consort to pull the tasselled cord that would lift him—him, Septimus Tinker, junior Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Space and the lowliest creature in all Her Majesty's Government—higher than the highest? If, that was to say, the thing worked. "If," as the Prime Minister was at that very moment expressing it, "our present experimental approach proves viable."

For who was about to man the pioneer time-dart, gallant little Shooting Star—"Shoestring Star," as Whitehall called it with laughing affection, since it had cost the taxpayer so modest a sum—in England's first attempt at breaking through the time wall? Who was to carry Her Britannic Majesty's friendly greetings into the Fourth Dimension? Not the Prime Minister, nor the Science Minister, nor the Aviation Minister. Not the Space Minister, nor even the other and senior Parliamentary Secretary, the debonair young Marjoribanks. Chivalrously they stood aside; the honour had been reserved for him, the diligent scholarship boy, Septimus Tinker. Selfless and humble service, unassuming devotion to duty, how seldom are thy sober heroes so justly rewarded!

It was nearly time, but not quite. Time, which waits (or so we have it on the highest authority) for no man, was making an exception in this case. Time was waiting for Tinker. Or rather, more importantly—and with more patience than the ever-cheery Consort, who was already plucking whimsically at the launching tassel—Time was waiting for the Prime Minister to finish his speech.

"It is time"—so that revered and right honourable gentleman was saying to the eminent audience gathered in Palace Yard—"to keep our appointment with Time." We should do it, he intended, with tact. It was not for us to break in on Time like invaders or uninvited guests. Time, his listeners inferred, was a gentleman; Time didn't like to be rushed—"to be shuttled before breakfast," as the Prime Minister put it, with the richest, the ripest right honourable smile imaginable, "between American pre-history and Russian futurism."

How loud, how merrily the laughter rang out at this sally! For both these Powers, it was well known, had been pouring out their treasure remorselessly, and had already claimed extensive conquests, ludicrously echoed and embellished in the popular news-sheets: the one, to have reached backwards in Time to the Mesozoic era, the other, to have plotted basic surveys across several millennia of what we were still accustomed, in our own unsophisticated way, to call the future.

"For ourselves," the Prime Minister went on, gently slapping Shooting Star's polished flank as if it were a favourite colt, "we put our fiver on this little fellow." He did not pretend to be familiar with the jargon in which the scientists liked to discuss these undoubtedly complicated matters. In plain language he understood the venture to resemble the throwing of a dart *through* the dartboard, *through* the wall, and into a room behind. "We shall hope," he asserted, "to find that mysterious room and to be at home in it."

The audience looked at the Prime Minister, and then at each other, with wonder and admiration. The condescension of this simple parable! The humanity! The sheer grasp! What a gift the right honourable gentleman had for the common touch, without ever actually *being* common! The devoted Tinker, though more used to these graces, paid his silent tribute too. As to which part of the celestial dart he might himself be taken to represent, the point or the feathered tail, this was a topic of meditation on which he did not allow himself to dwell. This, as had been so often emphasized, was a Team Effort, and egotistical reflections were out of place. The honest fellow was rather glad, in any case, that nobody's eyes were turned on *him*—none, that is to say, but the six pairs of very private, very personal, strictly domestic ones of Mrs. Tinker and a rosy set of little Tinkers—as he settled firmly into his space seat and made a final check of the Scientific Adviser's careful instructions.

Who could suppress musings of the most solemn order—unscientific, doubtless, but human enough—at the sight of the gleaming brass lever on its time-dial, embossed with the three fateful Ps? In the centre, P for the familiar Present; on the left, P for Pre-Present (which, albeit guiltily, the good Tinker confessed it helped him to translate mentally into Past); and on the right, most awesome of all, the third P for Post-Present. Here was the writing on the wall; once through that wall and all Time's hoard, not merely its small coin of unrewarding seconds, would be his!

"Time, we are confident, is on our side." His right honourable friend—Tinker knew a right honourable peroration when he heard one—was now drawing to a close. "The moment has come to put our faith to the test. If we succeed, let us not be arrogant, for the Universe is still vast and its ultimate mystery still unfathomed. If we fail, then, by the same token, let us not be downcast."

Now it was time indeed. A few cheery words from the Consort, and the royal hand tugged downward.

Whoosh! A restrained, British sort of whoosh—modest enough to be sure, but strong and steady too. Shooting Star, Septimus Tinker up, was on its way! Over the catalpa trees, above the Commons roof, past the astonished face of Big Ben—could it be Old Time dying and taking a startled look at New Time on its way to be born?—and so into the blue immensity of the heavens.

Whoosh! Onward the time-dart sped, until the exhilarated traveller listened expectantly for the cosmic alarm-clock which, if all went to plan, would signal that the mystic barrier

had been breached and the new dimension entered. And soon, sure enough—Ting-a-ling!—the crucial message came. They were through. Bravo, gallant Shooting Star!

But the great test was to come. How would the time-navigating mechanism behave? For just a moment he paused to let his thoughts rest on those twelve bright eyes left behind in Old Time, and then he threw the lever sharply to Pre-Present.

The effect was immediate and overwhelming. The earth-screen was suddenly green, and Septimus Tinker found himself glared at by a terrifying face.

Now it has to be admitted that Tinker, though no craven, had no overpowering appetite to meet the grosser monsters of either past or future. He could well be excused an encounter with a Russian tyrannosaurus as reported to have been sighted by the Americans, or cheerfully spared a rendezvous with one of the American flesh-eating computers so eagerly publicized by the time-travelling Russians. Yet, truth to tell, if there



"It seems we've knocked off a lorry load of the wrong brand."

was a meeting he would study to avoid, more than with either of these, it would be a meeting with the Prime Minister on one of the occasions when (as Whitehall sympathetically put it) Tinker had "blotted his copy-book again."

He *had* no choice in the matter. For the all-pervading green was not the primeval colour of the pre-Westminster swamps but the all too familiar green of the House of Commons benches emptied, as it might be, by one of poor Tinker's less fortunate orations. Indeed there he was, making it! He listened for a few moments, blushed deeply, and hurriedly jerked the lever.

He jerked it many times with increasing desperation. Was Time really on our side? Had we, after all, invested a sufficiently large stake in its mysteries? He ventured to wonder these things, for the time-gear was working in a strangely pettifogging (could it be *spiteful*?) manner. He was being transported not through past æons but through mere weeks and months! He was being returned to scenes he too well remembered, and wanted only to forget!

Jerk. The knuckle-rapping over the Coal Stocks (Space Research) Utilization Order—(Marjoribank's affair really, but Marjoribanks had been abroad). Jerk. The lamentable Satellite Estimates speech—(his worst ever, except *one*). Jerk. Ah, no, not *that*.

But the ultimate humiliation, the Shooting Star debate itself, was not to be spared him. Here he was again, at the end of the hideous day's long wrangle, put up to defend the modesty of our £287,350 investment in the time-dart. The tumult had slumped to an exhausted silence and again he felt his dry tongue tangling for the fatal, the unspeakable (but not, alas, unspoken!) words: "Let us squend, but not sponder, Mr. Squeaker."

Tinker was ready. He knew what to do. Anything was better than this—even the Future! Jerk. Hard went the lever over to the right.

With a contemptuous twang the mechanism broke. The unhappy Tinker, a fly in Time's amber, was immortalized in his few ill-chosen words. He would go on saying them for ever; the Prime Minister's horrified jaw would be dropping for ever; the roar of derision would be for ever *about* to follow.

It was hell, of course. But then—Tinker had to face the fact—it always had been.

Coming:
ANTHONY TROLLOPE
RUDYARD KIPLING
CONAN DOYLE

JOHN GALSWORTHY
JAMES JOYCE
ERNEST HEMINGWAY
D. H. LAWRENCE

Carried Pigeons

Peace returns, temporarily, to a Kensington Court

By H. W. YOXALL



"I feel fine now, thanks!"

I WAS called in the morning, went into the bathroom, and found it filled with ornaments, cushions and knick-knacks from my wife's bedroom. There was even a petit-point stool and a small quilted Victorian chair in the bath. It looked like a set for an Ionesco play.

I knocked on the other door and went through into my wife's bedroom. One large, loris-like eye emerged above the bed clothes.

"Have you gone mad?" I asked. "Or did you decide suddenly to start spring-cleaning in the night?"

For answer all she said was a portentous "Look!" and pointed to one corner of the ceiling.

The curtains were still closed, the room was only twilight, but I could descry a dark patch above the pelmet. "Still," I said, "if the flat above's leaking it's only local. You needn't have stripped the whole room. And," I added, glancing down, "why put a basket underneath it, why not a bucket? All

those magazines on top will be spoiled." She stirred a little in her bed and said, "Look again." I looked again. The triangular patch above the pelmet moved a little and let out a low moan. "A pigeon!" I exclaimed. "Pigeons," she replied. "There's another in that basket."

The flats in which we live are beset by these birds. Against the requests of the management, sentimental old ladies will put out bread for them. They swarm in the central courtyards, fouling the window sills, breaking down the pointing, and—what is worse—destroying early morning sleep with their incessant cooing. That is why, self-sacrificially, I let my wife have the inner bedroom, preferring the regular noises of the street myself to these avian distractions. She has become, in consequence, a particularly virulent pigeon-nonfancier.

"Two of them came in this morning early," she explained. "Right into the room. It was too soon to call you or the

maid. They were sitting on the floor and I caught one in the basket. The magazines are weighing down the lid. The other brute flew up on to the curtain rod. I didn't know what it would do there—at least, I did know what it would probably do—so I cleared everything movable out of the room that wouldn't wash. I didn't want to put the things in the hall in case I woke you, so there was only the bathroom."

"Well, thanks anyhow," I said, "for respecting my morning sleep. But where do we go from here? Do you expect me to climb up and catch it?"

My wife is a born tactician. Lying awake in bed she had planned it all out. It would need three men, she said, so we must wait till Herford (our chauffeur) came, and we must get a porter too. I left the manoeuvres to her fertile imagination, shaved, dressed and had my breakfast.

Herford was announced by the maid. My wife, who is an expert also in the matter of sparing her physical energy, rose and put on her dressing gown. The maid was asked to produce a dust sheet, two broom-handles, some string

and a large, empty food carton. Herford was to bring in the long steps. The porter was summoned.

The scheme was to be as follows. The steps were to be erected as close as possible to the sitting pigeon. (She hoped it would continue to sit.) The porter and I would hold the broom handles, with the sheet attached and tied between them, on either side of the game, barring its possible routes of escape. Then Herford, who is in every sense a handy man, would mount the steps and corral it.

"Let me try it by myself first, madam," he said. I was only too glad to give him the opportunity. The sheet at the end of the broom-handle was an awkward weapon to wield, and the porter also seemed to lack the zest of the chase.

Herford quietly mounted the steps, stage by stage, carefully looking away from the pigeon and making soothing noises which were supposed to allay its suspicion and lull it into a false security. He got to the topmost rung, was just about to reach out, when the pigeon quietly fluttered over to the pelmet at the other side of the big bow window.

Punch Civil Disobedience Campaign

Announcing a series of Incitements to Civil Disturbance, Riot, Newspaper Correspondence, etc.

No. 5

HOLD BACK THE TINSEL!

Wanted, determined teams of active traditionalists to discourage the premature celebration of Christmas. Will you smash a window and tear the cottonwool snow off a Useful Gift? Debag a department store Santa Claus? Stone an early Wait?

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR PAPER-CHAINS!

Full details, next-of-kin, etc., to C.A.S.S.A.C.,* 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4

* Committee for Action of Some Sort at Any Cost



Hollowood

"Your eyes are like optical organs, your cheeks are lateral walls of the oral cavity, your lips are labials, your nose is an olfactory appendage, your hair . . ."

I found it tiring to hold the broom-handle, weighted with the sheet, above my head, and suddenly remembered a cobweb brush with a long bamboo cane and went in search of it. When I came back I found, to my surprise and relief, that the second pigeon was in the bag—or rather in the food carton, weighted down by more magazines. At last, I thought, a justifiable use for all those glossy fashion books, with their masses of advertisements and heavy paper.

Herford had been caught in Singapore and spent years on the Burma Road. The prisoners of the Japs, he explained, had had to become expert hunters. Many a large lizard and other bush prey he had caught with his bare hands to supplement the starvation ration of rice.

"Do you like pigeon pie?" I asked.

We discussed ways and means of disposal. A little cyanide would have been useful, but it presumably needed a doctor's prescription. And the shadow of the R.S.P.C.A. seemed to overhang the debate. My wife, too, unfortunately mentioned Dr. Schweitzer, and theories about the unnecessary taking of life.

It was finally decided that after Herford had driven me to the office he should return, pick up the pigeons, and release them as far away as possible before returning to take me to a committee. The place where they were eventually exposed turned out to be Barnes Common.

Would they stay there, we wondered, and found a new society? Or had they the homing instinct to return to their Kensington friends? Or would they (we rather hoped), being pampered, domesticated birds, find no sustenance in the wilds of Barnes and starve?

The following morning, for the first time in years, my wife slept on undisturbed until a neighbour switched on his radio. A second morning of peace supervened. But at the third dawn there were two pigeons moaning again on her window sill.

"I wonder if they're the same ones," she said.

"We ought to have ringed their necks," I replied, "if we couldn't wring them."

As it is we shall never know if they are the same; or another brace; or—as we rather suspect—ghosts of the original pigeon pair, come back, Petrouchka-like, from death to haunt us.

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The Labour Party

seeks to appoint A LEADER



● THIS will be a key post in a long-term programme of voluntary extinction of an organization comprising over 6,000,000 members.

● THE successful candidate must possess powers of dynamic and decisive leadership combined with an outstanding capacity for blind obedience to the behests of his followers. Previous experience with Lemmings would be an asset.

● HIS intellect and personal integrity must be of the highest order and combined with that vital flexibility of character and conscience which will allow him to vote both for and against any resolution placed before him.

● PRACTICAL tests will include the measurement of the quickness of candidates' reflexes on the sight of a Card Vote, and their ability to talk affably with Mr. Sidney Silverman. Any candidate able to prove that he has survived being stabbed in the back might have a decisive advantage.

● THE successful candidate will be provided with a Deputy chosen from a large number of experienced applicants, who are prohibited only by modesty from presuming to the post advertised.

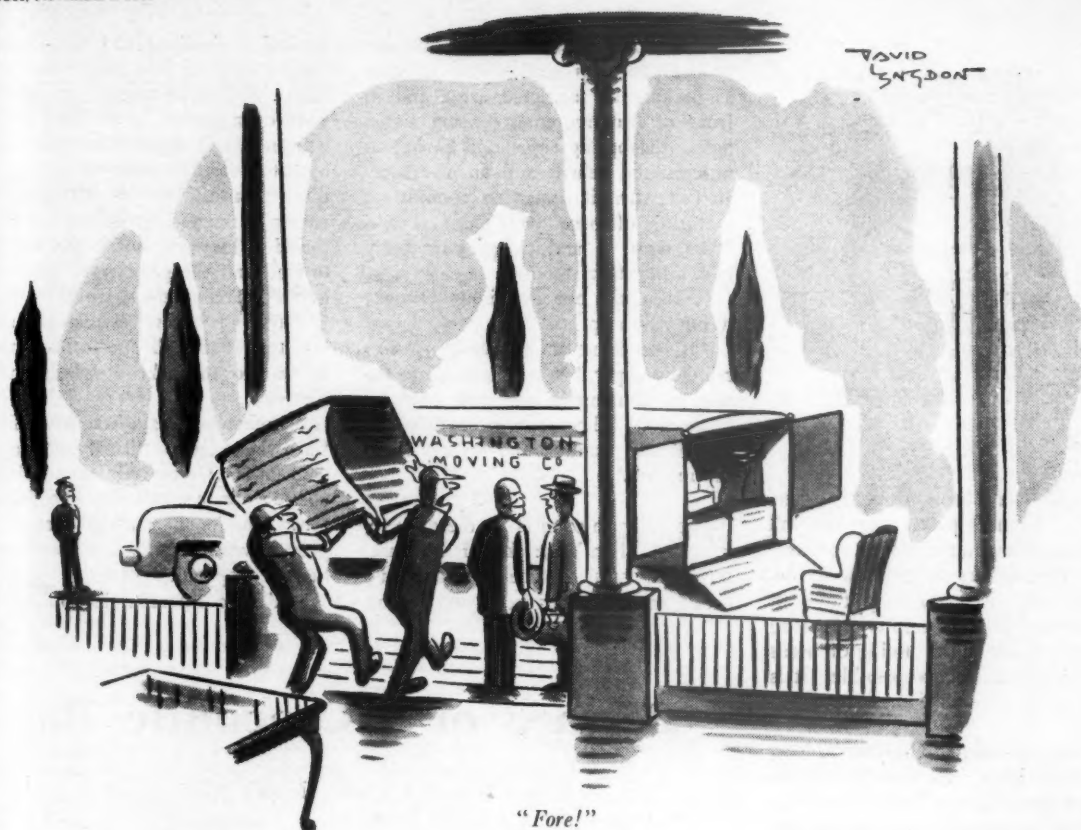
● THE post has excellent career prospects, especially in the field of memoir-writing. Attractive holiday terms are offered, including one week per year in congenial company at a well-known seaside resort. The work is in a building of historic interest with canteen and debating society on the premises and facilities for religious activities nearby.

● APPLICATIONS (which are unlikely to be confidential), with three references in triplicate and doctor's certificate of inoculation against Liberalism, should be sent to the General Secretary, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1.

Asst. Managing Director

● A LARGE civil engineering and building group has decided to appoint an Assistant Managing Director.

● HE will be required to take a direct and effective responsibility for specific duties as well as assisting the Managing Director in



"Fore!"

Our Man in America

P. G. WODEHOUSE is there when the news breaks

NEITHER Vice-President Nixon nor Senator Kennedy has as yet been heard from on the subject, but a man in Connecticut has come out solidly in favour of television commercials, insisting that he and his family much prefer them to the programmes.

"A strange thing happens at our house when we watch TV," he writes. "We keep asking each other 'Isn't it time for a commercial?' Is this because the programmes have become so gosh-awful, or are they making better commercials these days?"

I don't think it is so much that commercials are better as that they are the only things on television that show the brighter, sunnier side of life and remind us that it is not all hitting people on the head with broken bottles

or telling them to drop that gun if yuh know what's good fer yuh. There is a world, they tell us, where sweetness and light prevail, a world where the worst thing that can happen to a chap is to get an inferior breakfast cereal when he ought to be enjoying his crispy crunchies.

You take girls, for instance. On a programme you never see them when they aren't lying on the floor of a bar-room with four bullets in them because they knew too much, whereas in commercials they sit in bath tubs lathering themselves with Cleanwell Soap, the only soap that contains the ingredient neocencephrotanecin, which puts an invisible film of acentodoids on the epidermal glottifram, and are obviously about as happy as girls can be without bursting.

It would all seem to turn on whether you prefer your girls covered with soap or weltering in their blood, and the Connecticut man's pronouncement may well indicate a coming landslide in favour of the former.

In a *Punch* article which, though it appeared six years ago, will be fresh in everybody's memory, I commented on the new spirit of courtesy which is sweeping the U.S.A. I am sorry to see that this new s. of c. has been causing trouble. Obeying instructions from up top, toll collectors on the New Jersey Garden State Parkway all say "Thank you" to motorists as they hand over their coins, which of course is fine. But instead of merely replying "Not at all" or "Don't mention it" and driving on, the motorists, charmed with this



friendliness, have been lingering to start beautiful friendships, asking the toll collectors how everything is at home and who they are betting on in the election and what do they think of Khrushchev. The result—mile-long traffic jams and more tooting of horns than you would believe possible. It is always safer to say it with a snarl.

It was often said of Creedon R. Yost of Carlisle, Penn., that nothing but the best was good enough for him, and this was well exemplified last week when he was arrested for going a hundred miles an hour in his new sports model. When you and I are pinched for speeding the pinching is done by a single constable, probably quite an ordinary fellow with no pretensions to moving in the posher social circles; but the authorities did Creedon R. proud. It so happened that cars containing a State police colonel, a captain, a lieutenant, a judge of the circuit court, and Delaware Governor J. Caleb Boggs were passing at the time and they all pursued him and finally landed on his neck, the Governor foremost.

"That," he told reporters after coming through with the \$204 at which the Law estimated his exploit, "was my finest hour."

Difficult to get off the subject of motoring. There always seems to be something going on in that quarter. One's attention is drawn to Mike Mellon of 31, Crescent Street, Astoria, N.Y., who is charged with ignoring one hundred and eighty-seven traffic tickets which were given him by various officers of the law over a period during which

he used four aliases and nine different licence plates for such varied offences as parking in restricted areas and in front of fire hydrants, passing signal lights, disobeying signs, and having an unregistered vehicle and no insurance. In fact when it comes to committing motoring offences you name it and Mike does it, and things admittedly look a bit sticky for him.

He has just one sustaining thought to buoy him up.

"If convicted on all charges," says my daily paper, "he will succeed to the title of Scofflaw King, now held by William B. Thompson, who failed to answer one hundred and seventy-three summonses."

According to counsel for the defence, what led Alvin Wavrick of Rego Park, N.Y., to steal a licence inspector's badge and summons book and go out

issuing summonses to people was his client's ego. It was shown that Alvin issued five summonses, had two men booked on charges of peddling without a licence, and shook down parking-lot operators for \$78 under threat of giving them tickets. We do not think him wrong in supposing that he had hit on the ideal lifework, but it was too good to last, and the gendarmes jerked him before the tribunal of Magistrate Walter J. Bayer. His counsel pleaded, as we say, that it was all due to his ego, that he wanted to make a splash and be someone.

"Someone," said Magistrate Bayer, "is a vague term. I'll tell you precisely who he is. He is the bozo at whom in about thirty seconds flat I'm going to throw the book, making him in the process wish that he had never seen a licence inspector's badge."

Which he proceeded to do.

Beware of a Crocodile Bag

By PETER MAYNE

THERE was a girl they all said later was American. She went stepping down the street ahead of me, young, with a good figure, well covered. She was well dressed too, and she had a way of working her haunches as she walked that rather singled her out. I had been specially conscious of her for the past hundred yards or so because there was a man following along close behind her who found her irresistible—it was clear to see in the way he was jockeying for position, sidling up on her right, whipping over to the left again, only to be foiled each time by some clumsy interfering pedestrian or a lamp-standard or whatever it might be. I knew what he planned to do, too.

This was in Athens and the three of us—first the girl, next the man I speak of, and then myself bringing up the rear—were walking across the top of Constitution Square along with a whole crowd of others. On we went, the girl wiggling, the man set on his little plan, head held rigid and a bit to one side, one arm behind his back—she must surely have been aware of him as over

the road she wobbled and on to the further pavement, down the side of the Hotel Grande Bretagne. The man was most certainly Greek and I guessed that the girl could not be. He was coming right up alongside her now, very close... and then suddenly, without warning, the girl spun on her heel in a ninety-degree turn and the next moment she would be in at the Grande Bretagne side-entrance, safe in one of the little segments of those revolving doors. It all but caught the man off-balance: but the Greek mind is very quick and he reacted instantly. He had to move before she could slip away for ever. So his arm shot out and he pinched her smartly on the behind.

What should a girl do when this happens in the public street? In Athens it is an occupational risk all girls run and I have had talks with several of them about it. They mostly give the same answer. Nothing. They are very sensible about it: they realize that if they dress provocatively and walk provocatively, someone is likely to be provoked into pinching them. An Athenian girl can recognize a pincher

a block distant. He is quite easy to identify, it seems—the slightly furtive sideways advance, the hand behind the back symbolically out of sight, as it were, the manoeuvring—girls quickly learn to take evasive action, such as keeping away from shop-windows or points where they could get cornered, and the nervous ones certainly welcomed the full flaring skirts with the layers of stiff frilly petticoat underneath when that fashion came in. But those narrow, hobbling skirts . . . I have questioned several Athenians. They say it is better to come up from behind if you can. I can see the sense in that. "A *mezedaki*," they are apt to call it: a little *hors d'œuvre*. It is a game, really: a game for two persons, whether the second person wishes to play or not. And once the pincher has got his pinch in, or else the girl has outwitted him and escaped, he does not follow her up. He is content with his pinch, just as a picador is content with his pic, or the banderillero with banderillas. Most girls say that there is only one rule—if she loses she must do so with grace. No shrieks, no angry cries. She must just walk on as if nothing whatever had happened. The game is over. She has lost.

The game is not always very well understood by foreign ladies visiting Athens. An English lady with whom I was silly enough to discuss it said she was disgusted and that these men ought to be shut up and that if she had a young daughter she would not allow her to walk in the streets of Athens unaccompanied—indeed she wondered if she would bring the child to Athens at all, let alone let her loose in it. So I asked an American lady. She agreed with the English lady that it was disgusting but she wanted to be fair and show compassion for such a man: she wondered whether perhaps poverty and having to sleep a whole family in one little room . . . " . . . maladjustments," she hinted: "a thoroughly bad home environment . . ." But she believed nevertheless that girls should be protected. I said I thought girls could very well protect themselves—just as well, anyhow, as they can protect themselves from the flying, ruthless Athens traffic: and I added that the girl in my story should not have wobbled her hips so, at which both ladies promptly rounded on me again and said that girls could not help wobbling a bit, being built the

Quiet Night

Undergraduates of Cambridge University have been forbidden to take part in Guy Fawkes night celebrations in and around the Market Square.

NO more the bombs, the whizz-bangs hurled at Caius,
The rockets ricocheting off the knees,
The thunderflashes. Gone the seething press
Inflamed with bitter and *impolitesse*.
A Market Hill monopolized by Town
Where all is peace . . . I'm glad that I've gone down.

—ERIC WALMSLEY

way they are. It made them feel quite sick, they both said, to think of men following secretly along behind. Had Greek men no respect for womanhood?—this was what they wanted to know. I did not say so because I felt it would strike them as rude, but the truth is that girls in public places probably have to choose between being respected and being desired. If they choose respect they can try how it goes: they can get up on pedestals out of reach. Or they can be desirable and take a chance on that. But these two ladies I was talking to seemed to want desire and worship. Well, they can't have both.

The case of the American girl who had fled to the safety of the Grande Bretagne underlines my point. Her thinking was confused. She was not in the wrong, maybe, but she reacted wrongly. When the man landed his pinch and won, she lost her head as well as the game. She went black in the face and did something very shocking.

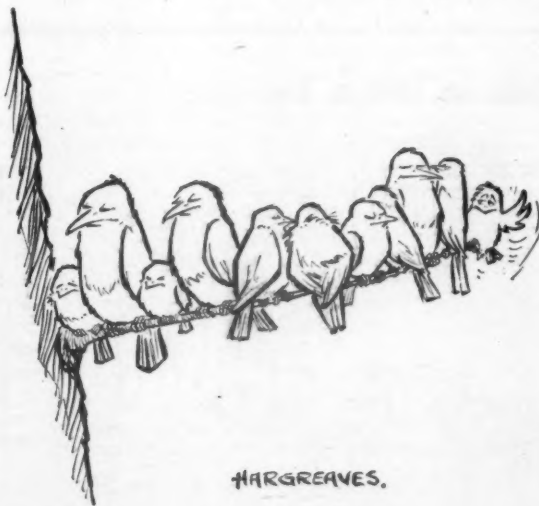
Everyone present gasped. She was carrying a big crocodile travel-bag—a splendid thing with metal clasps and buckles, and so on. She swung this bag of hers in a great arc and caught the man over the head with it. He went to the ground instantly. She tossed her head furiously and as she turned to wobble through the revolving doors to refuge, the man was rising to his feet again and wagging his head in his bewilderment.

"I only pinched her . . ." he said plaintively, looking round at us.

We were quite a little crowd by now—the hotel doorman, taxi-drivers, other passers-by, a policeman.

"*Tch-tch!* . . ." the people went, wagging their heads too and staring through the big plate-glass windows at the girl's retreating back. What sort of girl could she be? A taxi-driver helped the poor man up, brushing him down.

"Did she hurt you, then?" he asked with great solicitude.



HARGREAVES.

During the recent Dublin newspaper dispute "the wrong types appeared in many published reports." Some readers, conditioned to accepting news at type-face value, could be baffled if printers persisted in this policy

Dial O for Ornithology

ROBINS have nested in a telephone kiosk at Willingale-with-Mountfitchet, Essex, for the third year in succession. "Happen maybe they like the dialling tone," said Jasper Mortward (76), assistant sexton and noted amateur accordionist.

Our Nature Correspondent writes: This is unusual.

HE'D HAD HIS CHIPS

"HE went out to get some chips and when he came back four hours later he said he had happened to run into some Ancient Foresters."

—Woman at Tottenham

BEAUTY QUEEN IN STORM CENTRE DASH

MISS BLETCHLEY JUNCTION, 1960, has been invited to undertake a goodwill tour of the Congo, Quemoy and Matsui, and the Buraimi Oasis.

LIBERAL PROSPECTS IMPROVE

WITH the results of the Fermanagh and Tyrone election still undeclared, the Liberal Party late last night were certain of an over-all majority of 374 in the new House of Commons. "It was a nice clean fight," said Mr. Gaitskill in a television interview. "There's a wind of change blowing somewhere," said Mr. Macmillan.

"It's love that makes the world go round," she said last night in a television interview.

In private life Miss Bletchley Junction is 37-year-old Maud Perceover, secretary of the South-Eastern Regional Area of the Joy Through Jute Movement.

The Rev. Septimus Harboys

IN our issue of October 10, owing to a telephonic mishearing, we referred to the Rev. Septimus Harboys as "The Wrecker of Little Easing." This of course should have read "The Rector of Little Easing."

Mr. Harboys is not, has at no time been, and has no intention of becoming the Wrecker of Little Easing. There is in fact no Wrecker of Little Easing, the village having recently been rebuilt, following storm damage, at a cost of £250,000.

We deeply regret any pain and annoyance that may have been caused, entirely unintentionally, by the report which was published in good faith.

PEACE BID HOPES

Geneva, Wednesday
PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Macmillan to-day signed a 100-year pact here renouncing nuclear weapons and insulting language.

—B.U.P.

Man in Office by Larry



Essence of Parliament

THE Dying Ducks. With Mr. Nabarro otherwise engaged, there was, it might be thought, very little purpose in Parliament's reassembling. The Socialists had neither the heart nor the power to make much of these three days of the dying duck. They asked questions about American Polaris bases in this country, but were, not unnaturally, in no mood to press them. Mr. Watkinson made the stock ministerial answer that conversations were still going on, that a statement would be made in due course, but that he could say nothing at the moment; and there was little disguise about it that the Socialists were glad enough to see him slipping out like that. They would indeed have easily been made to look pretty silly if he had said something. Then they asked about the Monckton Report, but again allowed the Prime Minister to get away with it that he would say what he had to say on Tuesday of next week. When on Wednesday the Conservative Mr. Mawby of Totnes took advantage of a question about road congestion near Scarborough, to suggest that there are "many honourable members in this House who regret that they went to Scarborough this year," the little joke did not go down too well. *De mortuis nil nisi bonus*, and the Socialists are at the moment past jeering at.

Trips for the Boys. Mr. Bowles had an interesting point of privilege to raise about the alleged action of a firm of publicity agents in giving free trips to Rhodesia on behalf of Sir Roy Welensky to various Members of Parliament. The Prime Minister was benign. The Speaker courteous. The Speaker gave his ruling on Wednesday that there was no *prima facie* case of privilege, but a Socialist cannot do right in the eyes of a fellow-Socialist these days. Mr. Bellenger and Mr. Eric Fletcher, were, it seems, among those who had made these trips, and they made no bones about it that, privilege or not, Mr. Bowles had certainly been guilty of an imputation against them which they resented.

The Rent the Envious Casca Paid. The Opposition put a little more punch into it when it came to talking about rents, for that of course is almost the only topic on which their party is united. Mr. Butler humoured them and let them have a little debate about it on Wednesday night just to make a game of it. Mr. Brooke was firm and unyielding. Mr. Eric Fletcher alleged that Socialist Members had heard his reply with "astonishment," but to tell the truth there was singularly little mark of astonishment on their faces. It did not look as if many of them were following what he was saying at all, and of the minority that *was* following, the greater part I fancy, in spite of Mr. Fletcher, would have been far more astonished had Mr. Brooke said anything other than what he did. The set subjects for debate were on Tuesday Parliamentary control of expenditure and on Wednesday the state of transport—the latter on an amendment standing defiantly in the joint names of Mr. Gaitskell and Mr. Harold Wilson. Both were important

enough in themselves, but nobody expected anything much to come out of debates conducted in such an atmosphere—nor did it. All that did come out was a mild revival of Butskellism, as Mr. Butler and Mr. Gaitskell paid one another compliments and made it evident that neither of them really wanted anything to happen.

A Matter of Seating. Interest at Westminster this week—it is hardly necessary to say—was almost entirely in the ninetenths of the iceberg below the surface—in the committee rooms upstairs and the proclamations of rival leaders and deputy leaders denouncing one another. On the floor of the House the only interest was in the delicate problem of how the Socialists should seat themselves. They did that very adroitly. The earlier questions on Tuesday were about finance, and therefore, naturally enough, when the curtain went up Mr. Wilson was in his place to put them. Then, as soon as he had done his stuff, he got up and went out, and with his exit Mr. Gaitskell came in in a red tie and took his place. Mr. Anthony Greenwood had no part in all this—sitting as far away as he could from the Front Opposition bench in a back corner-seat below the gangway where he was under no danger of having to speak to anybody. Mr. Silverman was in his usual corner seat on the first bench below the gangway, within hailing distance of the Opposition front bench, though he did not hail. Mr. Strachey lounged elegantly at ease in a country suit as though he was not quite certain where he was and had not noticed that anybody else was there at all. On Wednesday for the transport debate there was a more ticklish problem, for the Socialists' leading spokesman on transport is Mr. Wedgwood Benn. Most of the Socialists had decided that abstention was the better part of valour, and though it was the Socialists who were supposedly censuring the Government their benches were in general a great deal less crowded than those of the Conservatives. The front bench pattern was

interesting. Mr. Gaitskell sat fairly in the centre, his loyal supporter, Mr. Gordon Walker, on his right. Mr. Wedgwood Benn, the official spokesman, was at the extreme end of the bench—as far away from Mr. Gaitskell as he could get—with the great buffer of Mr. Robert Mellish in unfamiliar spectacles to keep him separate from his leader. Mr. Desmond Donnelly had usurped Mr. Silverman's place immediately across the gangway and that burly Gaitskellite sat there, like an observing policeman, to make certain that Little Benn did not strike out of tune to-night. As a matter of fact the transport debate, for those members (if any were there) who listened to it, was not bad. People are getting a little fed up with the delays in the road programme—and

that indifferently whether they are Conservatives or Socialists or Liberals—and Mr. Marples had had quite a rough passage at question time—not least from Conservative back-benchers like Mr. John Hall of High Wycombe. Mr. Marples is a man who likes being liked and prefers that things should pass off in a haze of bonhomie and good publicity. But he can hit back when he has to, and he took the chance to make rather a good fighting speech in defence of his policy. If only there had been anybody listening to it it would have been interesting.

—PERCY SOMERSET

☆

"WALES.—The Prime Minister had not changed his mind about appointing a Secretary for Wales and would continue to be the responsibility of the Minister of Housing and Local Government."

Daily Telegraph

Oh, but is this fair to Henry Brooke?



JAMES CALLAGHAN

In the City



Behind the Gold Rush

THERE are worried brows in central banking parlours. All the tacit assumptions that are made about the stability of currencies and of exchange rates go by the board when the free price of gold on which all these calculations rest soars out of reach of the official price. That official price is \$35 per ounce. It was fixed as long ago as 1933. That it should have endured for twenty-seven tumultuous and inflationary years is little short of a miracle. That it should be called into question to-day is hardly surprising.

The focus of disturbance is the U.S. dollar. It is still the almighty dollar and has behind it as large a gold reserve as those of the rest of the free world put together. None the less, it is under grave suspicion and strain. Since 1957 the balance of payments has turned against the United States. That is the fact, even though the greater part of the deficit is the counterpart of America's generosity in giving assistance to other countries and in investing capital abroad. Be that as it may, the United States has been losing gold and its reserves have fallen from just on \$23,000 million in 1957 to well under \$19,000 million.

Of the present reserve no less than \$12,000 million are immobilized as domestic gold reserves held against the liabilities of the Federal Reserve Banks. That leaves a precarious \$6,000 million against which the United States owe the rest of the world debts, payable at very short notice, amounting to nearly \$16,000 million. That is the vulnerable technical position against which one must assess the present wave of distrust of the dollar and the rush into gold.

That distrust is accentuated by the fact that the economic position of the United States is deteriorating and by the political and economic uncertainties of the imminent Presidential election. Whatever the outcome of that election it is widely believed that the new administration will have to be more

expansionist in its economic policy—highly desirable on all counts except for the already battered balance of payments of the United States.

Probably the most ominous aspect of the recent rush into gold is the fact that it has been swollen by considerable private American buying. The American citizen is not allowed to buy gold in his own country but there is nothing to prevent him sending his dollar abroad and buying the metal in London, Zurich, or any other international free market.

The situation may yet be held as a result of vigorous intervention by the U.S. authorities. They could sell gold on a massive scale and teach the speculators a lesson. But that would not cure the more fundamental ills from which the dollar is suffering. If enough people believe that the dollar is over-valued and also that the time has come for a revaluation of all currencies in terms of gold this force of public opinion may

snowball and become uncontrollable. That is apt to happen in monetary affairs where, even more than in war, nine-tenths is moral and one-tenth physical.

If there is to be such a revaluation the main immediate beneficiaries will be the gold mines and particularly those which are now on the bare margin of profitability. In the tug of war between political deterrents to investment in South Africa and the encouragement of this hope of a higher gold price the latter is likely to prove the stronger in the weeks and months ahead. If one is to back this horse one could do no better than to buy the shares of the leading South African mining finance companies, namely: Anglo-American, Central Mining, Goldfields, Johannesburg Consolidated and Union Corporation. They are well run; they have diversified their interests; they are the best baskets in which to put one's golden eggs.

— LOMBARD LANE

* * *

In the Country



The Fox Usually Wins

I WILL lay five to one against a fox found by hounds being killed by them. And, at the end of the season, I should expect to show a profit. Why the long odds? The fox has all the aces, in spite of a fit pack of hounds, and perhaps because of the field following hounds. (This does not, I must point out, affect the arguments about the cruelty of fox-hunting. If you were setting out to shoot your neighbour and had only one chance in five of hitting him, could you say you were attempting only one-fifth of a murder?)

Sheer weight of numbers against him may favour a fox. Some of the most ardent foxhunters override hounds, thus spoiling their chances. And you can be quite sure that a fox realizes the advantage of all you people in cars, whether you are following a hunt, or just going about your everyday business. A road carries virtually no scent, and all the

petrol fumes upset the delicate olfactory senses of hounds for some time.

Another dodge a fox may try when he is getting tired is to nip smartly into some gorse where he knows there is another fox. All the noise of the hunt will upset the fresh fox who will make a bolt. Hounds will be after him, and we know who is all right, Jack, as he recovers his breath in the gorse listening to the hunt disappearing in the distance.

Once away a fox has a good turn of speed. His best chance lies where there are plenty of people about. Without wishing to be more offensive than usual, I will tell you that your scent is probably much stronger than that of a fox. So, what better than to dodge in and out of back gardens. Even if hounds can circumnavigate all the obstacles in their way, the chances are that they will make themselves extremely unpopular with all the garden-cum-chicken-run owners.

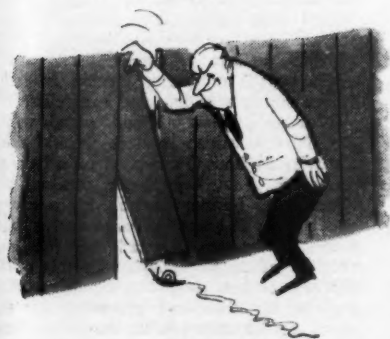
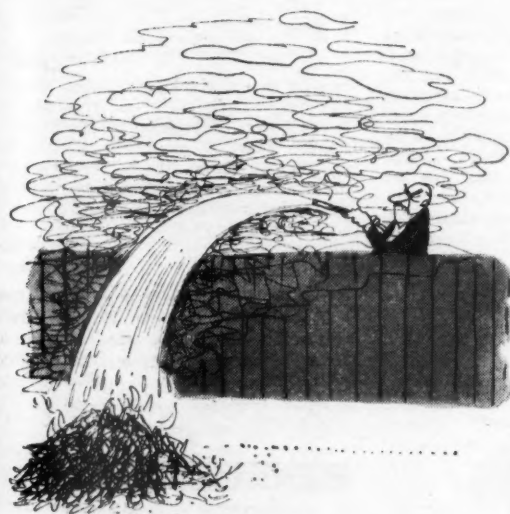
If in open country, a fox may choose to have a good roll in some really high manure, or to run through a field of sheep. Either course will throw hounds off the scent for a time.

Even the most sporting farmer may be on the side of the fox occasionally. If he does not want hounds across a field of his there is no better way than to look a Hunt servant straight in the face and declare that the fox ran in the opposite direction.

The wonder is that hounds ever kill! They do—but I should hate to work out how much each fox costs in hard cash.

— JOHN GASELEE

FENCING MATCH





CRITICISM



AT THE PLAY

Sive (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

I FIND it depressing but significant that a new play which has had a great press in Ireland and favourable notices at the recent Dublin festival should turn out a feeble melodrama stemming from Synge and reflecting a peasant life which has long ceased to be romantic. Has nothing happened in Ireland in the last fifty years that is worth writing about? No wonder her theatre is in decline. Suspicious as I am of the wilder flights of progress, it would be nice to discover a cold tap added to the kitchen or some other sign of faint improvement. But in *Sive*, by John B. Keane, all the old stuff is faithfully collected: a silly feud between two families, a grannie with a clay pipe, a tinker with voodoo powers who is simply a witch-doctor, and a matchmaker who still has a thriving practice. If Stella

Gibbons had turned her caustic attention to Ireland her *Cold Comfort Farm* in the bogs would have been just like Mr. Keane's.

The language has none of Synge's splendours. It is a synthetic patchwork of philosophic oratory improbably pumped out by embittered peasants. The story is for these days incredible. A couple are offered two hundred pounds by the matchmaker if they will marry their young niece to a horrible old farmer who cannot keep his hands off her. The girl is in love with an eligible carpenter who is black-listed because his cousin had seduced her mother. The tinkers sabotage the wedding with the farmer by pulling an effective piece of blackmail on her aunt, a particularly nasty woman; but *Sive*, who is supposed to be intelligent, swallows her aunt's absurd suggestion that her lover may be her brother and kills herself in the bog.

In a very uneven production this rigmarole seldom comes to life. The spells

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre." Royal Festival Hall.

"Punch in the Cinema." Odeon, Leeds.

A collection of drawings from *Punch* that won the award of the 13th Salone Internazionale dell'Umorismo is now on show at the Italian State Tourist Office, 201 Regent Street, London, W.1.

cast by the sanctimonious tinker, with his loopy son drumming beside him, only add to the general impression of Cloud Cuckoo Land. There is no common style, and no common accent. Only Tony Quinn as the matchmaker emerges with anything like the native authority one expects from an Irish company.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)
The Playboy of the Western World (Piccadilly—19/10/60), fine production from Dublin. *A Passage to India* (Comedy—27/4/60), very well adapted. *And Another Thing . . .* (Fortune—19/10/60), bright revue.
 —ERIC KEOWN

AT THE OPERA

La Sonnambula (ROYAL OPERA HOUSE)

A MINUTE before the curtain was due up a circle of white light wavered on to it, sign of something amiss backstage. The General Administrator came on with his quizzical smile to give us Joan Sutherland's love, and explain in a roundabout way that she had a cold. Up the curtain went on an 1830 Alpine village square with splendidly overdone perspectives (Signor Sanjust's handiwork), a party of dusty millers in gamekeepers' gaiters, stolid squads of young women in spiky haloes and lots of hay and umbrellas.

Wearing a yellow wig and enough votive medals to furnish a side-chapel, Miss Sutherland (Amina) appeared on a balcony and sang how happy she was at her betrothal to Farmer Elvino. Since Elvino was sung with some brilliance and suavely acted by Agostino Lazzari, her jubilation seemed reasonable enough. In this opening aria of hers Miss Sutherland croaked part of the time and undersang for the rest. At the end of it the house gave her a bawling, thunderous ovation. Nothing quite like this would have happened if



Thomasheen Sean Rua—TONY QUINN

Sive—JACQUELINE RYAN

she had sung on top form. Miss Sutherland has for some seasons been avidly adored by most coloratura-fanciers who (and they are many) find Maria Callas a pain in the ear; and in any case English opera audiences, when not booing sadistically, love to show chivalry. As the evening ambled on at Maestro's Serfin's just and gentle tempi, Amina sleepwalked into the rustic bedchamber (all hay, hock and silver tankards) of a wandering nobleman who behaved in a more restrained and gentlemanly way than might have been expected from the egg-sized cravat ruby he had so caddishly worn in the first scene. Through all this, through the scandal that followed and through a second (rehabilitatory) sleepwalk that brought her near to a roof-edge and death, Miss Sutherland sang, fluted and croaked her way gamely, giving at times better coloratura value, despite her bad throat, than certain of her rivals do when bursting with rude health.

When Miss Sutherland's voice is back *La Sonnambula* will be capitally sung all round, for the supporting cast has many talents, the most striking being that of Jeannette Sinclair, who sang a rancorous and amorous innkeeper with bite and style. The thin gruel of the story and the naïveté with which Bellini piles set-piece on set-piece are in no way redeemed by the production, a limply unimaginative business. The fact remains that, taken a page at a time, Bellini's music is as living and cool as rosebuds.

—CHARLES REID



AT THE PICTURES

The Millionairess
The Siege of Sidney Street

ALMOST the only trouble with *The Millionairess* (Director: Anthony Asquith) is scrappiness, lack of concentration: it takes a path through a number of episodes and, in spite of artificial plot devices meant to provide it, never develops any strong continuous line of its own. Perhaps this fault is a legacy from the play; I don't remember, and as I always insist it's irrelevant—the question is what the film is like, whether it is in itself a success. Strictly *The Millionairess* doesn't succeed as a whole, but long individual scenes and innumerable moments come off very well, and the flashing star performances and its flamboyant, stylized manner carry it. There's plenty of enjoyment for anybody here.

In outline the story, such as it is, could be described as the expression of a serious point in nonsensical terms. The point is hardly a new one, in films or anywhere else (money-can't-buy-everything, crossed with hard-to-get-is-most-tempting); and the characters, as so often in Shaw, are very superficially realized and hardly more than personified "humours." Therefore it must rely for its appeal almost entirely on the acting and on the detail of incidental scenes. Both of these luckily are excellent, within their artificial convention.

The tone is set in the opening scene, when the will under which Epifania

(Sophia Loren) gets millions and a huge commercial empire from her father is read in circumstances suggesting that somebody like Reinhardt took over the boardroom, or built one on a skating-rink at Olympia, and rehearsed the whole proceedings for months beforehand. But not many of the scenes can be on this scale, for much of the effect depends on incongruity: the beautiful elegant woman with all the money in the world has to pursue the poor Indian doctor (Peter Sellers) in his usual haunts. Thus we get the argument as they stumble through the riverside market, and the scene by the whelk stall, and the scene in the fish-curer's shed . . . and the scene in the doctor's clinic, which the publicity boys have eagerly seized on as an excuse for advertising the film with a picture of Miss Loren in her underwear. It's safe to say that people attracted by this publicity won't appreciate half the good qualities of the film and that many will be repelled who would appreciate them: the wit of the dialogue, the spirit and cleverness of the playing (Miss Loren has never been better), the attractive design (production designer Paul Sheriff, art direction Harry White, Eastman Colour photography Jack Hildyard). I wish the pace of some of the duologues were quicker, and I wish the whole thing were less disconnected, but I enjoyed it.

"It really happened!" say the advertisements about *The Siege of Sidney Street* (Directors: Robert S. Baker and Monty Berman)—to which one can only reply Not like this, it didn't. The makers acknowledge the help of the City of London Police, but one is tempted to wish that they had helped themselves a bit more. It's obviously a low-budget production

(though if it had been properly gripping I should not have noticed this), but there are so many places where by a little foresight or perception or a little more trouble it could have been improved. There is a deadeningly staged feeling about this account of the celebrated London street gun battle of 1911 and what led up to it. One reason is that we see practically no sign of life in the streets other than people or things involved in the story; and even at that, some of the streets suggest sets specially built. Much of the dialogue in exterior scenes, too, has that hard-to-define air of something recorded indoors. The story has been decorated with a charming Russian girl (Nicole Berger) who loves Peter the Painter (Peter Wyngarde) and makes it more difficult for the pursuing Scotland Yard inspector (Donald Sinden), and one of the anarchist gang even sings; but the important things, the excitement and suspense, are not there.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

La Notte Brava or Night Heat (Director: Mauro Bolognini) is an episodic, jerky piece, with a good deal of excellent detail, about a few young men and girls on a hot afternoon and night in Rome, idling, stealing, fornicating, fighting—anything that offers. *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60) you know about. *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60) is "retained by public demand"; *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (28/9/60) and *Can-Can* (30/3/60) continue.

No new release of note. *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs* (19/10/60—124 mins.) has points. An amusing revival, with Peter Sellers in a small part: *The Smallest Show on Earth* (24/4/57—81 mins.).

—RICHARD MALLETT



"Bit ostentatious don't you feel—have you got the same thing in grey?"

ON THE AIR

Nights Full of Music

THERE can be few television programmes which have given such consistent and rewarding pleasure over so many years as "Music For You" (BBC). I don't suppose the score-readers of Donaueschingen or the fire-cats of Beaulieu are sent by the programme's avowed intent "to make good music popular and popular music good," but Patricia Foy's presentations have been a regular delight to musical groundlings such as I.

The standard of enjoyment set in the past has been well maintained in this latest autumn series. A style of production has been developed, romantic yet relaxed, which is nicely suited to musical

entertainment at the fireside, and the diversion is gratefully soothing and restful at the end of a long winter's day. The lighting and camera-work are especially pleasing to the listening eye and the picture presented in "Music For You" seems always to have an unusual richness of light and shade. A solution, also, has happily been found to the delicate problem of photographing opera-singers in action and yet preventing their facial contortions from breaking their vocal spell. The friendly, unpretentious introductions of Eric Robinson still serve to unbate our breath at meeting virtuosos, and his air of personal appreciation effectively engages our own. There are times when he banters over-fulsomely with an artist—his recent bout of welcome with Joan Hammond vanished into giggling inaudibility—but these are readily forgiven in gratitude for the unstarchy atmosphere he brings to his concerts.

The current series has kept the usual pleasant balance between instrument, voice, dance and orchestra, and thus far I recall with most enchantment Celia, the charming oboe-girl from Stroud, the violin of Nathan Milstein and the emergency visit of delightful Mattiwillda Dobbs.

The moguls of commercial television generally prefer to give the public what they want and can spare little time for the innovation until it is a proven crowd-pleaser. A ready welcome is therefore given to the current ATV experiment in comedy "The Strange World of Gurney Slade." Hills and Green, the script-writers of the show, have for some time past been making surreptitious attempts to allow intelligence to percolate their material and to escape from the rigid confines of orthodox situation humour. These break-outs have usually been detected by the mediocrity-monitors and they have been directed sternly back to the rules of the standard gag-book.

They were very successful, however, a few months ago with the mime-and-soliloquy pieces which Anthony Newley put over brilliantly in a "Spectacular" series—the Night Engraving sequence was most memorable—and "Gurney Slade" derives in style from those pieces. It aims, as was symbolized in the opening scene, to break away from the accepted situation comedy and to find humour one stretch removed from reality, in a plane somewhere between the whimsy of Paul Jennings and the bedlam of the Goons. It is a difficult world to work in and the boundary between the funny and the stupid is perilously narrow in those parts.


In the first show, however, I thought that the freshness of the ideas carried things along with a quiet fascination, and interest was held by wonder as to where we were going next. The soliloquys and conversations with articulate objects were amusing, but the vacuum-cleaner fantasy strove too self-consciously for effect with its Chaplinesque, old-film technique, and went on too long. This section made a sudden leap into utter surrealism and did not succeed in carrying our attention with it. Anthony Newley's off-beat comic talents seemed most effective when maintaining a tenuous connection with everyday, in his street-musings, and in company with talking stones, speaking animals and peculiar policemen. I don't know whether the first novelty of the basic ideas will hold through the run, but it is intriguing to watch endeavour to break new ground in television humour and only chivalrous to wish the experimenters well.

The bumbling, nervous drollery of Harry Worth has always been to my taste and it will be interesting to see whether his specialized range can be widened to support the comic load in his new series. The episodes to date of "Here's Harry" (BBC) have had his likeable, zany character engaged in earnest conflict with officialdom, trying to find his lost umbrella or to get his neglected dustbin emptied. Hinderingly helpful, sweetly unreasonable, he has moved from mix-up to muddle in a cloud of misunderstanding, trailing exasperation and chaos behind the very best of intentions. The episodes have been quite entertaining without ringing any rafters, but the fun has all been rather in one key. The supporting actors have been good in their parts but have rarely had any humorous stature in their own rights. The dependence for laughter on the single style of the star tended to make the umbrella situations drag a little, but there was noticeably more diverse action in the succeeding dustbin drama. The court scene in which our hero conducted his own defence allowed rather more aggression than is normal in his character and the laughs came strongest in this part. Harry Worth is something of an original among modern comedians, owing his methods to no one—except, possibly, Gracie Allen after a nervous breakdown; his effects call for considerable skill in timing and inflexion, and I hope he finds greater variety in the coming features.

—PATRICK RYAN

Last Wednesday's Table

(See "Quadrilateral Jubilee," p. 617)

 Punch Table Dinner October 26th 1960 To Honour E. V. Rieu Esq. E. H. Shapard Esq. Sir Alan Herbert P. G. Widdowson Esq. In the Chair Alan Agnew Esq.	
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BOOKING OFFICE

NEW FICTION

By ERIC KEOWN

By the Sea, By the Sea . . . George Sumner Albee. *Gollancz*, 13/6

The Bachelors. Muriel Spark. *Macmillan*, 16/-

Flight Into Camden. David Storey. *Longmans*, 16/-

In This World. Eugene Ziller. *Gollancz*, 16/-

FOR once I find myself in the extraordinary position of having to endorse a blurb. On the cover of George Sumner Albee's *By the Sea, By the Sea . . .* P. G. Wodehouse is quoted as saying it's one of the funniest books he's read for ages, and for myself I say ditto. It is more than just a funny book, for it makes an Aunt Sally of the streamlined chromium three-car-a-family life the Americans have been bally-hoed into living, and is wise and innocent and gloriously disrespectful.

Mr. Albee has created an upside-down society of his own for whose inhabitants one feels a great deal of envy. They are all refugees from the ulcers of prosperity, living so blissfully on a shoestring in a shack colony on a forgotten beach that they have taken care to remove the road-sign that might bring missionaries from the world of progress. Among them is a young entomologist whose helplessness is a sad burden to his friends; when his racy articles on bugs bring him embarrassing publicity he is whisked to New York to net a quick fortune on TV, and is so appalled by all he sees that he gives his profits away and returns gratefully to his mouldering hut. The colony is dominated by a ripe old party who has made polygamy work, but all the refugees are eccentric in their own right. Mr. Albee makes this crazy society seem solid. His dialogue is brilliant and his invention unflagging. I am very happy to fall in beside Mr. Wodehouse and root for this refreshing book.

In most other weeks I should have put Muriel Spark's *The Bachelors* first. Like Mr. Albee she writes of oddities, but hers have not fled the world but inhabit one-room flats in the Brompton Road, meeting at coffee-bars in Hampstead and having love affairs with either sex. Her world is shabby, nomad and in a rickety fashion intellectual. Her hero is an epileptic curator, and this novel centres on a bogus spiritualist circle and the prosecution of a medium for fraud. Miss Sparks is a wit and her off-beat conversations are very entertaining. But of course it is nonsense to suggest there are more bachelors in London than in Bucharest or anywhere else.

Flight Into Camden is a second novel by David Storey, who made his name with

This Sporting Life. It is a fairly well-written book about an exceedingly thorny liaison between a madly bitter miner's daughter and a hopelessly indecisive school-master who is married and takes the fashionable view that families "seem to be the worst parasites of the lot." Having made their home town too hot to hold them they flee to a sordid bedsitter in London, where they torment themselves with endless squabbling. I thought Mr. Storey much surer on the girl's relationship with her family than with her dreary lover. The old miner's visit to London in a vain attempt to get his daughter back is described with so much human understanding that Mr. Storey is clearly a writer to be reckoned with.

In This World is a collection of short stories by Eugene Ziller, an American with a Jewish background, that are distinguished by ruthlessness and a quite unusual power. Mr. Ziller's heroes are all men in jams of one sort or another and mostly men who are up against life anyway. He traces their states of mind excitingly, often to a surprise conclusion, and writes with a strange authority of personal doom.

THE LUSH FANTASTIC

The Sabres of Paradise. Lesley Blanch. *Murray*, 30/-

This gorgeous chapter of romantic history, an introduction to the reign of Shamy, the almost legendary Tartar leader who defied Czarist Russia's imperialist designs on the Caucasus, is packed with the richly improbable. Miss Blanch's handling of this gargantuan subject is masterly: hers is the art of matching reality to the fantastical, and her descriptive prose—lush and dramatic—admirably suits her material. Most expertly does the author handle her juxtaposition of the historical background (fascinating and often topically apposite) and the personal drama. Exciting and moving is the pace set in the parallel stories of the two kidnappings: Shamy's son, Djemmal-Eddim, brought up with loving care by Nicolas I, and the Russian Princesses and their retinue captured as reprisals some years later by the Tartars.

Miss Blanch's genius for this kind of historical illustration excels in her ability to provoke our deeper sympathy for the lot of Djemmal-Eddim, protected, honoured and happy in captivity, shocked and despairing in his ultimate freedom, than for the savage and degrading treatment experienced by the Russian ladies in their

enclosed harem-like confinement. There are scintillating portraits of the secondary characters in this incredible drama: Miss Blanch's pleasure in their description makes for our pleasure. One can well understand why this remarkable book took four and a half years to write; its length must be approximately 250,000 words and it is a triumph of its kind; particularly so since it reveals that there still remain untracked areas of social history.

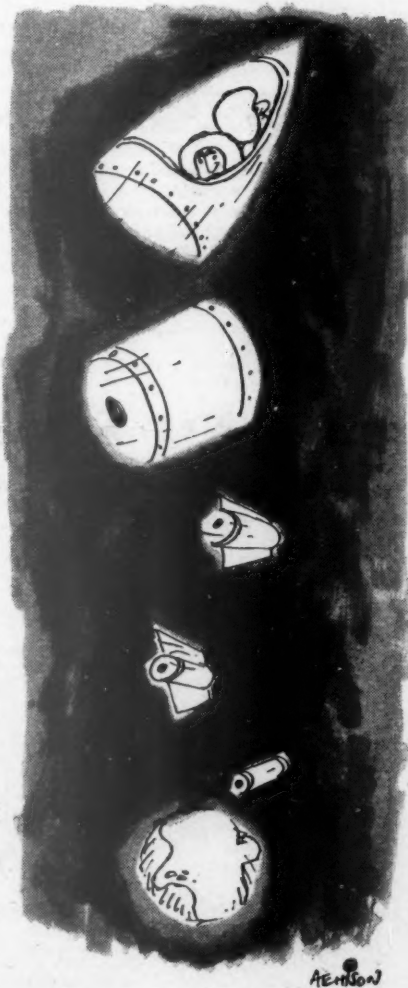
—KAY DICK

HANOVER SQUARES

The Reign of George III: 1760-1815. J. Steven Watson. *Clarendon Press*, Oxford, 35/-

King William IV. W. Gore Allen. *Cresset Press*, 30/-

"Providence," thought Lord Shelburne in his fortunate age, "has so ordered the



"Say, Walt, wasn't this supposed to be a two-stage rocket?"

world that very little government is necessary"; the now docile British were then hard to manage, and "roars of rage" greeted a tax on cider. But this salutary state of affairs made it hard to rule at all. George III, a conscientious monarch with a "fussy and brutal honesty," had to "jam into place together sufficient of the usable, but mutually repelling pieces, to make some government which could live in the political conditions of the time." He never wanted to be more of a tyrant than his grandfather, and probably never read Bolingbroke's Patriot King. He merely wanted to govern.

Since Namier revolutionized eighteenth century studies no one has surveyed the whole field. With massive scholarship Mr. Watson reviews political events, social and cultural life, the Industrial Revolution, the American Revolt and the Napoleonic wars. Here is a standard work which will long hold its place, enlivened with wit, anecdote, and insight. The elder Pitt is a "great hawked-nosed tyrant of a Minister"; the rule of the squires was at once "easygoing and brutal"; Bute first became intimate with the Prince of Wales as a fourth at cards when rain stopped cricket, and, in the Universities, "the Regius Professors, as royal appointees, were left at leisure, impotent to corrupt the self-centred contrariness of the College fellows." A masterly, and readable, book.

Fussy, hasty and loquacious, William IV was the first Royal Prince bred to the sea; after forty years' frustration, he proved an unexpectedly sensible monarch and "helped to confine a potential revolution

within the dimensions of a constitutional crisis."

"The Royal Tar" loved the Service, was devoted to Nelson and was broken-hearted when retired at twenty-four. The grand tour, during which Frederick the Great insulted him for not having read *Candide*, was hardly in his line, but he soon set up house with Mrs. Jordan, the Irish actress, known as Little Pickle; "the comic syren of Old Drury," wrote a journalist, "has abandoned her quondam mate for the superior attractions of Royal Lodge." In fifteen years ten Fitzclarences were added to Mrs. Jordan's family: they lived in a jolly Bohemian insolvency. William was rehabilitated by the plain but sympathetic Queen Adelaide.

On accession the King wanted to be styled Henry IX, let some fresh air into the Court of George IV, and wandered about unescorted until genially mobbed. He was a cheerful character, whose last words were "Bear up, bear up." Though unsuited for the Industrial Revolution "he gave his name to a notorious engine," and his good sense smoothed the passage of the Reform Bill. A lively, rather engaging portrait.

— JOHN BOWLE

MYSELF I SING

Memoirs of William Hickey. Edited by Peter Quennell. Hutchinson, 42/-

Mr. Quennell has abridged the *Memoirs* and broken them off at 1783, the point at which he feels Hickey began to lose his impulsiveness. He has also printed passages

that the original editor prudishly omitted, though these do not amount to much and the comparison with Boswell's *London Journal* is more hopeful than accurate. The cuts do not seem to be extensive, mainly accounts of *causes célèbres* Hickey attended or detachable, repetitive episodes.

Here in one packed volume is Hickey's youth: his compulsive sociability, his energy, his mountainous eating and oceanic drinking, his Haymarket girls, the long, drunken voyages to Jamaica and India, the frolics among the best society of Madras and Calcutta, the spasmodic but successful and remunerative legal practice, the dishonesty. As an autobiographer he is too much of an extrovert to be first class; but he is a born journalist, always clear, brisk, vivid and interesting. His detail about London and the East in the age of Burke and Warren Hastings is valuable to the political and social historian and enormously entertaining to the general reader

— LESLIE BANKS

The Autobiography of Mark Twain. Edited by Charles Neider. Chatto and Windus, 30/-

One day in Florence, in 1904, Mark Twain "hit upon the right way to do an Autobiography: Start it," he wrote, "at no particular time of your life; talk only about the thing which interests you for the moment; drop it the moment its interest threatens to turn pale . . ." He put his plan into effect; and here, for the first time, is his full autobiography. Mr. Neider has served his hero well. He has drawn upon all his autobiographical writing and put it all in chronological order; he has worked from manuscript wherever possible; he has added enough unpublished material to make a separate volume and, what is more, he has unearthed some fascinating new photographs of the author of *Huckleberry Finn*. The result is a clear, enthralling reflection of Mark Twain: a vigorous, humorous, egotistical, honest, far-ranging confession. It is a stream-of-consciousness autobiography that discloses not only its author but a series of friends and celebrities and passing men-in-the-street. A fine book to dip into and to ponder.

— JOANNA RICHARDSON

MONEY IS THE ROOT

The S-Man. Mark Caine. Hutchinson, 12/6

"Whatever you read in the papers, hear on the lips of statesmen or teachers, critics or clergymen, the only real criterion of merit in our present society is money." The sentence might be from Orwell's *Keep the Aspidochelone Flying*. In fact, it is the thematic platitude of Mr. Caine's ponderously ironic guide to materialistic success in Britain to-day. The form of the book is Dale Carnegie's and the technique Stephen Potter's, but the underlying morality is fiercely puritanical. Once one gets used to the simple trick of stating Christian precepts upside-down, the tiny shocks of the first pages become the numbing monotony of the last. Mr. Caine is on the side of the angels, all right, and he writes with the plain clarity of a good



"I'd like us to be married, but how could I be sure of you?"

text-book, but the points he makes are too obvious to be made so often and at such great length. With a twenty-page essay Mr. Caine would have been a more convincing S-author.

—PATRICK SKENE CATLING

THIEF-TAKER

War on the Underground. By Ex-Detective Chief Superintendent Edward Greeno. John Long, 21/-

Edward Greeno, who joined the police force at £3 5s. a week and ended, still at less than £2,000 a year, as head of the C.I.D. in No. 1 District, including Soho and the West End, was a tough, unsentimental C.I.D. man. His memoirs, livelier than most of their kind, include a dozen murder cases, but are interesting chiefly for the accounts of more professional villains, racecourse gangs, diamond tweedlers, coiners, petermen. He is frank about the connection between detective and informer—a tip-off is almost always the beginning of a chase or an arrest. Frank, too, about violence. One pair of criminals "looked like the aftermath of a train crash" when he had dealt with them, another gang "looked horrible—even the station sergeant wondered what had happened." In both cases the crooks used violence first. Greeno believes in the cat for hold-up men, is strongly in favour of hanging. On his days off he was a professional backer, who sometimes put £100 or more on a horse. He boasts that he could win at the races in a week as much as he earned in a year. Probably he is typical of a good police detective, genial, alert and ruthless.

—JULIAN SYMONS

A QUINTET OF GHOSTS

Four Absentees. Rayner Heppenstall. Barrie and Rockliff, 13/6

Mr. Heppenstall describes his acquaintanceship with Eric Gill, George Orwell, Dylan Thomas and Middleton Murry anecdotally and rather jerkily. He is frank, which means he is in danger of being thought malicious, and his little book will not only be annotated by literary historians but gulped by people who enjoy gossip about the 'thirties. It lacks the focus that the Introduction fumbles for, but some of the episodes are as unnaturally vivid as scenes in a convex mirror.

Mr. Heppenstall gives a confusing picture of his young self. It is difficult to grasp what he was up to; the quest seems to have had no goal. I was also puzzled about the economic foundations of this curious world of little reviews, sociable drinking, helpful, sock-darning women and Communities with vague, wavering aims. An expansive bohemian life lived on the proceeds of reviewing for magazines with tiny sales does not quite ring true. The unreality extends to the portraiture. Perhaps the observations lack definition because the self-portrait of the observer is shadowy.

—R. G. G. PRICE



"Then, carefully releasing the friddling pin to unworple the garvel-hook from the dipple, you simply depress the snork and out comes your gruffet, already cooked."

CREDIT BALANCE

Calendrier Gastronomique. Marius Dutrey. Frederick Books (with Allen and Unwin), 30/-. A curious and delightful collection of gastronomic essays and texts by a master-chef, with an exhibition of beautiful menus appended. Note: only Lord Kinross's introduction is in English.

A Crooked Sixpence. Murray Sayle. Macgibbon and Kee, 16/-. Young Australian gets a job on a London Sunday paper of the worst kind, and is involved in some of their dirtier games. A sparkling first novel, amusing and exciting at times; but a little dirt seems to have rubbed off Mr. Sayle's newspaper on to his manuscript.

Vintage Cars. James Barron and T. B. Tubbs. Batsford, 12/6. Twenty-four classic

cars (all but two are real "Road burners") superbly photographed in colour, and linked together by Mr. Tubbs's expert text. The final two (Monoposto 2.9 Alfa and Prince Birabongse's E.R.A. "Remus") are not strictly Vintage—being born after 1930—but gratefully received if only for the reminder of times when one saw most of the driver at work, instead of just the top of his helmet.

Eltonsbrody. Edgar Mittelholzer. Secker and Warburg, 12/6. Gruesome doings in eerie Barbadian house. Narrator picks landlady with taste for dissection. Readable light entertainment, if not quite so poetically horrible as its author may have intended. Just the book for a summer like this year's.

FOR THE PRESENT

YOU'LL have noticed that Christmas comes round faster each year. Yet 53 issues of PUNCH still manage to squeeze through the narrowing gap. A comforting thought? A brake on a whirling world? Don't keep it to yourself. Make PUNCH the 1960 Christmas Present for your most deserving friend, to count off the weeks of 1961 at leisure. Send us the name and address on a separate sheet of paper, add your name to the form below, and we will do the rest, including Greetings from you, timed for The Day. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00)

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MY NAME..... Mr. Mrs. Miss
(BLOCK LETTERS)

ADDRESS

.....I enclose remittance for.....

Please send PUNCH throughout 1961 to the name(s) and address(es) as detailed on attached sheet of paper, preceded by a Greetings Card on my behalf to arrive at Christmas. (The service can be started earlier if desired.)



FOR WOMEN

Healthy Retreat

WHEN I went into hospital my children went too, there being no one but my thankfully inexperienced husband left to care for them.

We arrived one Monday morning in a bulging ambulance, accompanied by four suitcases, three hefty picture-books, two teddy-bears, one miniature carpenter's bench and half a battalion of Breakfast Cereal Infantry. My daughter, five months old, clutched also one pink rattle, one blue-green rubber-foam giraffe and a shred of her three-year-old brother's best nylon tartan shirt. The driver, heaving out her Carricot, ripped "L" from his trouser-leg on the half-extended ladder of a fire-engine I thought we'd left behind. This time the only curly mop he ruffled consolingly was his own.

We entered the reception office where a smart young lady clerk inquired which child needed treatment. "Neither," I lied; for by now one had his hand trapped in the strained mesh of an In-tray and the other was choking purple on a green lump of giraffe.

We reached the children's ward at dinner-time. Blobs of rice pudding caught my attention smartly as we neared an empty cot. "This one's for Christopher," the sister threatened grimly. "Baby will have a small room to herself."

"You don't mean Christopher will be IN BED? In his pyjamas? All day long?" I had imagined in my innocence a sort of convalescent day nursery where bandaged babes would romp and scream and rip each other's stitches with delightful unconcern. If I had only known . . . But it was too late now. I staggered to my lonely bed three wards

away and gnawed my Spock with ravenous disillusion.

I soon found I need not, as my husband had suggested, bribe a messenger; some eager young probationer who would dash back and forth between the children's ward and mine with news of how my offspring were progressing. The whole staff knew already. Nurses stared at me with more than professional interest, sisters frowned, passing housemen grinned; even consultants halted their processions to inquire if I were the parent of the child who filled his pillowcase with liquid Acriflavine, or borrowed his neighbour's splint to make a surplus-food-chute. I was proudly defiant. "Well," I sniffed, "if you will keep him in bed all day . . .!"

So Christopher got up. He "helped" about the ward. He wrote me notes with a thermometer dipped in Gentian Violet and tied two small boys together by the draw-strings in their nighties. He escaped into the garden, gathered me a gorgeous bunch of flowers and

asked a passing matron if she'd kindly deliver them and at the same time get some money from me for a tube of Smarties each for all the children.

When father visited him and took him out for "walks" our son was so full of thwarted energy that he ran non-stop up the nearest Pennine and turned cartwheels on a quarry-rim until the shale ran through his shirt.

Then they let him visit mummy, and I almost died of fright when he sat still as a bad concussion, with his eyes fixed on his sandals and his arms serenely folded. In exaggerated whispers he informed me, on departing, that you mustn't make a noise where people were ill, but he'd be glad if I had the money for a box of liquorice allsorts.

Personally, I had nothing to complain of. I received wonderful attention. The doctors couldn't cure me fast enough, and I broke several records for the speed with which I rallied, responded, convalesced and was finally discharged.

Baby, who had thrived and slept and gurgled in all the right places, departed heavier but none the wiser. Christopher, who helped, with astonishing calm, to pack his things, announced that he knew what he'd like to be. No, not a surgeon or a male nurse, but the man who went round with a step-ladder changing the light-bulbs.

To the sister on the children's ward I found it hard to express my gratitude. Dared I hope that my two had not been too much trouble? She gave me an infinitely weary and bewildered smile. "We've never had to cope with healthy ones before. It's made us realize just how ill our genuine patients feel."

The ambulance-driver with the almost-invisible repair in his trouser-leg glanced resignedly up to Heaven.

"I've been in hospital," my son explained to him. "So you'd better not grab my fire-engine like that. It might be infectious."

— HAZEL TOWNSON

Rome on Wheels

TOAD would have an instant affinity with the Romans. It's the only place I know where they're apt to run amok on a push-bike. Just the feel of a revolving wheel is enough to set them off. By the time they've graduated to a Vespa they're slicing the straps off the tourist's sandals just to keep their hand in. Right now the two-stroke has the

edge on the Vespa. The toreadors of Via Nazionale, they prance to and fro the autobuses, measuring in millimetres, and carrying on a non-stop vendetta with everything else on wheels. Pedestrians are mere blots on their horizon. Not that I've seen any actually run into the ground as yet but one cannot deny that spots like Piazza Venezia are the

Deflation

HOW lucky I am that I've been gifted
(You say you keep the drying-up cloth this side of the
shelf holding the gas-poker?)

With a perfectly dazzling brain that's lifted
(Oh, sorry, that saucer stays in the rack,
No, no, I'll put it back)

Me out of the mediocre
And, enhanced by an excellent education
(Shall I put these forks anywhere or just here for the present?)
Plus exceptional powers of concentration
(This cup on top of that cup
Or do I hang it up?)

And a really rather pleasant
Degree of mental self-sufficiency—
(The cupboard with a flap or the one with the ordinary door on?)
No good. In other women's kitchens
(I still haven't found what happens to this perforated spoon,
But don't worry, I will soon)
I am an utter moron.

— ANGELA MILNE

breeziest in town. It's in the piazzas that they really show their paces. Below my balcony is a fair-sized example; five roads merge into one and it's like having a ringside seat at the wall of death. One can pick out the pedestrian tourists easily enough; they lack the fatalistic approach of the Romans. The French plunge fearlessly in wherever the fancy takes them, leaping about like salmon and giving as good as they get. The Germans move slowly in a state of continuous reproachful surprise and the British cling with optimistic tenacity to the zebra crossing. Rome is full of these white-striped havens; they give a pleasing reminder of home. Only yesterday my friend Assunta came upon a nervous Kashmiri hovering at the kerb and, taking him briskly in hand, ushered him on to a crossing. She was explaining their purpose when her words were cut short as a passing Fiat shot smartly into Piazza Di Espania trailing her bag from its offside indicator.

The influx of foreign tourists, especially from northern countries, has fallen alarmingly, and as the noise increases even the Romans have been moved to object. They cry out in rage as the doors of the trains crash madly at every stop. They have even enforced a law against klaxon horns and nightly they turn up their television sets to an even higher pitch in an effort to drown the two-strokes. They never win but they compete bravely. All night long the programmes bat from bar, pizzeria and palazzo. (America has staked out a fair-sized claim on Italian television. Last night we saw *The Son of Jesse James*. Addicted to westerns as I am I found it hard to reconcile myself to a sheriff with a strong Venetian accent.) When the programmes finish—during the Olympics it was rarely earlier than three—the two-strokes come back into their own. It's like trying to sleep in a beehive wired for supersonic sound. About three they begin to slacken off and one drops off to sleep amid the snuffling snorts of the all-night autobuses and the happy cries of parting friends, while the two-strokes and the Vespas strain at the leash till morning, and the hotel managers toss uneasily in their sleep wondering what's become of the tourist.

— CATHARINE DRINKWATER



☆
"Mrs. Guy formally placed the Mayoress's chair of office on Mrs. Williams and said she hoped she would be happy and enjoy taking her place as the leading lady of the town."

Northern News (N.Z.)

No harm in hoping.

"She's been threatening to leave him for years."

Toby Competitions

No. 138—Opening Lines

COMPETITORS are invited to write a poem from a patient to his or her dentist. Limit: 14 lines.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by Wednesday, November 9. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 138, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 135

(Fashionwise)

Ideas by inventors of a new dress line were prolific, sketches eye-opening, grasp of idiom embarrassing, but unfortunately rather a lot of the ideas were the same. Some competitors should be made to enter a fashion parade in their own creations. The drawing shown is the unaided work of the winner—

DR. D. A. SPENCER
SHEPHERD'S GATE
WAGON WAY
LOUDWATER
RICKMANSWORTH
HERTS

From Hirosh Ima's Spring Collection—the "Fission" Line; a synthesis of Edwardian top and Elizabethan foundation—just what Paris wanted to restore her *amour propre* after the "H" Line.

A successful colour scheme is crimson skirt with yellow and grey tulle top whose countless billowing yards swirl excitingly with every movement. As a help to the undeveloped or uncertain figure it is an anatomic triumph.

Urania, who displayed it, wore anti-radiation cream make-up, black sunglasses and carried a geiger-counter shaped hand-



bag containing a collapsible Cape Canaveral and a basic survival kit (the book of Common Prayer in Esperanto).

The ensemble suited her and—though it's a weeny bit pricey—it should suit U2, whether you are plus or minus 35.

Runners-up who receive book tokens were:

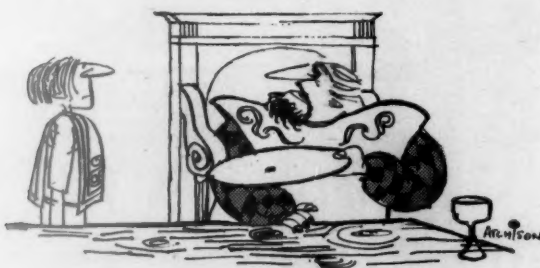
THE PLIMSOLL LINE

Plimsoll's new Line is clearly inspired by the announcement that a new Cunarder is to be built. This rising designer's models really seemed to *cruise* before us at yesterday's showings.

Both front and back (or should one say bows and stern?) create the same "liner" illusion. The high, funnel collar sits on a "bridge" halter above a square-buttoned, "cabin" strip with a "prow" bust. A hidden zip follows the "bows" down to the knee-length "keel" hem.

For maximum effect the hair is worn in a wire-supported "smoke stack," a horizontal development of the old bee-hive.

Bernard Sykes, 14 Speer Road, Thames Ditton



"You are only supposed to taste the food!"

THE ROCKET LINE

The R-line is slim and cylindrical, with no waist, and contrives to conceal the bust and other convexities of the figure unsuited to high Mach numbers. Glamorous interest is afforded by frilly and colourful bloomers which show beneath the Venturi skirt hem, suggesting rocket blast. Hats resemble nose-cones or space-probes: accessories take the form of fins.

Our expert comments: "The Rocket Line shown in the Autumn collections signifies modern Woman's streamlined determination to get into the orbit of affairs while still retaining and being seen to retain her essential femininity. Every woman deserves this Rocket."

W. J. Grant, 16 Harrington Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11

Egg-boiler — Lampshade — Handbell — Bathing tent — Pagoda — Indian club — rolling pin; these are all utterly outmoded. The Paris couturiers have unanimously decided on the LARVA LINE for 1961. Carried out in various shades of caterpillar green, grub brown or maggot, this fascinating, tantalizing design keeps the observer intoxicatingly bewildered. Where (if anywhere) is the waist? Which bulge (if any) corresponds to a natural protuberance? Where are her knees? Where will she bend on sitting down? In the new style, Woman is more Sphinx-like, more intriguingly ravishing than ever.

R. Kennard Davis, On-the-Hill, Pilton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

The Globe Line has "universal" appeal. Beautifully proportioned, it looks the same from any angle (and no one can call you a "square"). This intriguing creation is drawn in tightly at the neck and knees, and leaves everything in between to the imagination.

Equally flattering to all figures, it can be worn back to front, upside down, inside out or sideways, as there are no sleeves, but cunningly concealed zippers in many convenient positions.

Any colour or combination of colours can be worn. And of course foundation garments are no longer required.

A. R. Fuller, 34 Weymouth Bay Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset

THE BEE LINE

Ladies who have more than a taste of money will make a bee-line to buy the dress with the new line—others will simply make a bee-line. The bodice and skirt consists of alternate circles of black and yellow material. It could even be knitted in double-knit wool. The sweater and stockings can be either yellow or black, according to the mood of the day, and it is this versatility which we believe will appeal to so many.

To complete the outfit wear a tiny, black velvet hat with two large antennae springing from the centre.

Mrs. A. Fulbrook, 155 St. Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent

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